"THE DUCE OF DIAMONDS," STRANGE AND THRILLING, BEGINS NEXT WEEK

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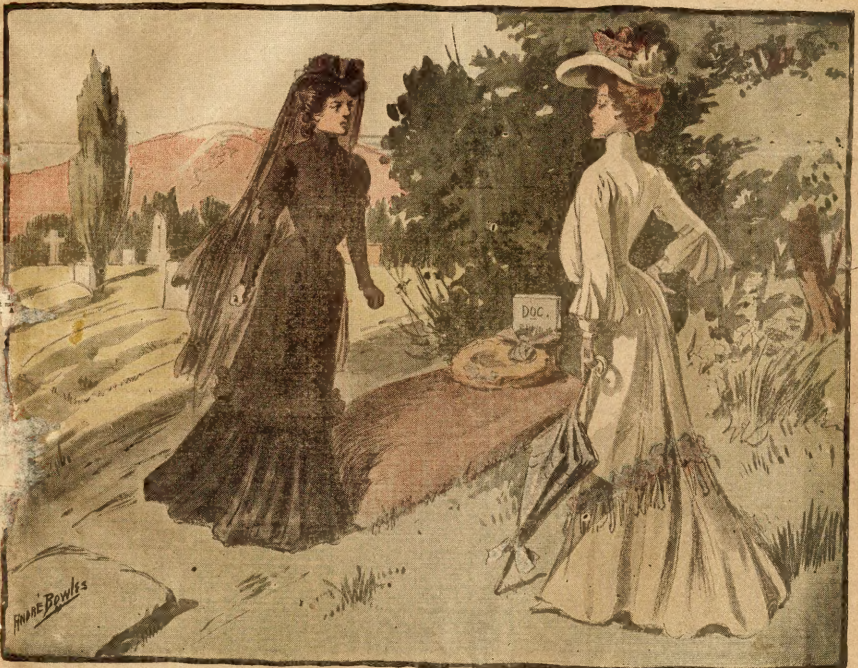

DOCTOR RENHART'S WIFE; Or, THE FATAL HONEYMOON.

By J. M. MERRILL, author of "Birdella," "Marching Through Dixie," "Blackade," etc.

CHAPTER I.

Dr. Rolfe Renhart and his bride had returned from a three weeks honeymoon. Bright as a butterfly, Demonia fluttered about her twin sister Harmonia. Happy girls were they.

Harmonia may have envied the good fortune of Demonia. She did not hint that such was the case, however.

"You've had a delightful time, Deme?"

"The time of my life, Harm. We visited the Falls, Saratoga, Newport, Washington—every place and everywhere, and here we are back to dull old Swampland, again."

"And you don't like it?"

"What--Swampland?"

"Yes."

"I did not say that. I shall advise the doctor not to settle here, however."

"The place is not to your liking, Demonia. Well, neither is it to mine."

The tall blonde, Miss Peprys, sighed. Her face, pale and lily like, was pretty. Harmonia was prettier than her sister. This was the general verdict.

It was said, too, that she might have had Doctor Renhart had she chose.

The two girls, twins of one and twenty, were unlike as flowers and swine. Harmonia was blonde, tall, willowy. Pure complexion, blue-eyed and Hebeish.

Demonia was short, red-haired, somewhat freckled, brown-eyed and had a temper of her own. Harmonia had none. The girls were one in sentiment. This as respected the love of one for the other.

The twins were in their room at the old home, the house of Aunt William Peprys. Aunt William had raised the girls from infancy. At twenty-one the twins had inherited a small fortune. For some unknown reason, Demonia came in for the larger share of their grandfather's fortune.

Harmonia was an heiress in a small way. Demonia's fortune was above a hundred thousand. Not large for the present day, yet it was a comfortable sum. Doctor Renhart thought it so, else why did he choose the homelier of the twins for a wife?

There might be reasons other than the one of money. Demonia was quick of wit, pleasant and companionable. Harmonia was dreamy and irrational, not a fit companion for a bustling man of the world like Doctor Renhart.

"Harmonia is cut out for an artist's wife," said Aunt William.

Perhaps this was true. Harmonia had been companionable to the doctor. The two were on the best of terms, and rumor had them engaged. He married Demonia and surprised Mrs. Grundy. Why? That would be telling. Besides I do not know. Perhaps that fortune had something to do with Doctor Rolfe's choice.

"It seems queer," said Harmonia.

"What seems queer, Harm?"

"That you are married." The speaker placed her arms about her sister's neck and burst into weeping. Demonia comforted her with:

"We need not be parted, Harm. You will live with me after I have a home."

"I cannot leave Aunt William," sighed Harmonia.

"It will be hard of course."

"Why can't you and Doctor Rolfe settle in Swampland? He's not too big for the town I hope."

Harmonia drew suddenly away from her sister. Her pale face was slightly flushed. She seemed annoyed. Demonia stood before the glass. She began fixing her red knots of hair. The freckles on her nose and under the brilliant eyes showed plainly. The hands wove long tresses of Titian red in and out, finally twisting the whole mass into a delightful knot behind the pink ears.

Those ears! They were the one pretty feature of Demonia's face, and these were in truth but a side issue. Harmonia sat down, watching the bride.

Presently the doctor's voice was heard calling.

"Go down and entertain him, Harm, there's a dear. Tell him I'll be along in a minute," wheedled the girl at the glass. Harmonia needed no second bidding. She was with the tall, handsome doctor almost in a second.

"Ah, you, Miss Peprys!" exclaimed Doctor Rolfe as he walked aside with the handsome twin.

The large room of the Peprys mansion were alight, and guests were arriving. This was to be a gala night for friends of bride and groom. The welcome home of two of Swampland's most respected young people. By the way, the doctor was thirty-five. "Not a chicken any more" as Aunt William expressed it.

The two strolled to a seat beneath a tree behind the house. They were not new to the place. Once Doctor Rolfe had held Harmonia's hand and whispered soft nothings in her ear from this very spot. Was he going to do so again?

Evidently the girl did not fear. She was too dreamy and unconcerned to take alarm easily.

"You have a lovely home here Harmonia."

The doctor was at a loss for words else he would not have spoken as he did. His companion sighed and said "yes."

"I suppose Demonia told you all about our delightful trip, Harm?"

The doctor laid a hand on the two in his companion's lap and glanced up into her pink and white face. There was light enough from the house if not from th

Chinese lanterns swaying among the trees for close observation.

"Yes. It was delightful, no doubt."

"How could it be otherwise. But, Harmonia, I want you——"

A crashing step cut short the words. The hand of Doctor Rolfe fell aside. A boy came stamping towards them.

"I have been looking for you, doctor," he said.

"Yes?"

"This here's for you."

The youngster held out a letter. Doctor Rolfe received it.

"Excuse me," he said to Harmonia.

Stepping to a nearby light Doctor Renhart opened and read the letter.

His face went white. He crushed the letter and flung it from him.

"Harmonia," said he, approaching the girl.

"Yes?" said she, rising. His face was pale. She could see that he was agitated. The wind rattled the branches of the trees as he bent toward her.

"Tell Demonia not to be alarmed. I must leave for the present."

He turned and was gone before she realized what had happened. What was it all about? A strange way of acting for a gentleman, she thought. She turned to question the boy who had not yet departed.

"What is it, Dan?" she asked, hurriedly.

"Don't know."

The lad turned and ran into the shadows. Harmonia was alone and puzzled. Guests were coming thick and fast. A hum of voices filled the atmosphere. "It is time for me to move from here," murmured the tall girl.

She was about to pass on when something white caught her eye from the grass at the roots of a tree.

She went forward and picked it from the ground, the note flung angrily aside by Doctor Renhart.

Harmonia concealed the crumpled letter in her bosom and hurried away. She actually hurried, a thing unnatural to her. She was puzzled and perhaps alarmed.

"What nonsense," she thought a moment later. "Of course some one is ill and has sent for the doctor. What a simpleton I am. I will tell Demonia without alarming her."

The girl entered the house. She greeted her newly arrived friends. Her usually pale face was flushed now, and more than one remarked that she looked more the bride than did her sister.

Demonia was now with the guests and receiving congratulations. Harmonia sought her room at the first opportunity. She sat down in a comfortable chair and sighed. She had had day-dreams. They were night shadows now. Her sister had won the man she loved and the future seemed dark.

It was silly for her to care. Of course the doctor knew his own heart.

"Demonia is a sight smarter than I am," she soliloquized. "Smartness and not looks win in the game of life. Shall I go and live with them? I do believe Demonia wants me to. If she only knew; but she doesn't."

The girl bit her lip and smiled. A bitter, heart-sick smile it was.

Steps were heard approaching down the hall. Aunt William looked in.

"Why, Harmonia, why aren't you with the rest down stairs?" asked the fat, little woman. Harmonia smiled faintly.

"I'll be there in a minute, auntie."

The roly-poly little woman went out. Harmonia sighed again and stood up, tall and willowy, examining herself in the long glass. She saw a face that looked its sorrow and disgust with the world.

"This must not be," she said, forcing a smile. She walked to the open door, then suddenly bethought herself and turned back. She drew from her bosom the note Doctor Renhart rad that night received, and held it up to the glow of the gas jet.

The girl's cheek blanched as she read.

CHAPTER II.

The note was brief and to the point.

"Doctor Renhart:

Do not delay a moment but come. All is discovered! If you would save a disgraceful scene, fly at once.

MIDGET."

The blue eyes of the tall twin dilated. She heard a step in the hall. A cheery voice was humming a love tune. It was Demonia. The girl with the telltale note stood rooted to the floor. Her face was white and stony.

Harmonia pressed her full, red nether lip with her teeth till the blood started. Demonia approached. She stood on the threshold of the room. The hand holding the note darted toward a heaving mass of muslin. An instant later it came away empty.

"What you mooning here for, Harm? Why don't you come down? Have you seen my husband?" cried Demonia, in laughing undertones.

"Yes, I saw him,' 'said Harmonia, faintly.

"Why, you're white as a ghost. Have you seen one, sister mine?"

Demonia entered and laid both hands on her sister's shoulders, piercing her with a look. Ought she to give the note to Demonia? This was the tall twin's thought. She decided in the negative. It might end well after all. Who was Midget? A girl, of course. How many of the gentler sex had the doctor ensnared? Harmonia's heart was bitter, very, very bitter, just now.

She smiled into the freckled face of Demonia and laughed aloud.

"It was not a ghost, then?" said the bride.

"Nothing at all. Yes, I will go down."

The sisters, arm in arm, swept into the hall. On the landing they fell apart. A cheery laugh rang up the long stair from below. Two gentlemen were there talking lightly. A pair of eyes glanced upward and transfixed the bride. Such eyes! Brilliantly dark, black or what not, Demonia did not know.

"Who is he?" she asked, turning to Harmonia.

"Which one?"

"The one with the mustache and curling hair."

"The tall man with such an air?"

"Yes, of course."

"It is Captain Jubal Axby, of the Custer guards," said Harmonia. "He has been about the town for some days, and has called here several times. It seems he knew our uncle, Mr. Peprys. Aunt Will is very much gone on tne captain."

"And you, Harm?"

The bride turned a quizical eye upon the slender maiden at her side.

"I, oh I detest military men."

"Too bad, I want to see you settled, Harmonia——"

"I should think I was settled with Aunt Willaim. What more would you have?" demanded the tall twin with a low laugh. She was still haunted by the hidden note. What would Demonia do if her husband failed to return?"

"Will you be entirely happy here, Harm?"

"I must stay whether I am happy or otherwise." There was a bitter taste in the words. Demonia felt this. Her sister was puzzling her with strange moods. The two went below. Demonia met Captain Axby later. A pleasant, congenial man she found him.

They were in the conservatory away from the crowd. The captain was a fine conversationalist. He had much to say of the West. Had met Doctor Renhart there and respected him very much.

"The doctor was our regimental surgeon for several months," said he. "By the way, I haven't seen the doctor this evening."

"Haven't you? Well, I'll see that he doesn't escape his friends." Demonia went at once in search of her husband. She did not find him. No one had seen him within the hour.

"Ask your sister," said Miss Jones, a heavy blonde, with half a million in prospect. "I saw her with Doctor Renhart not long ago."

"They are together now, perhaps?"

"Perhaps," and Miss Jones grinned behind her fan.

Demonia's search for her husband proved unavailing. Several friends had missed the doctor, but nobody much wondered. He had doubtless had a call in a professional way. Rather unfortunate, considering the occasion.

Demonia grew restless. She went back to the conservatory. The captain was not there. Some time later she saw him and her sister wandering under the Chinese lanterns in the front yard. A handsome couple they were truly.

"If Harmonia could only learn to love someone, thought Demonia, it would be ever so nice." "I know she is not happy."

Neither was Demonia a short time later when her husband failed to put in an appearance. She wondered why he had gone without speaking to her.

The guests began to depart. Captain Axby lingered among the last.

Demonia saw him standing in the shadow of an oak with Harmonia quite near. They were talking pleasantly. Demonia watched them curiously. She saw the captain raise her sister's hand, touch his lips to the taper fingers, then turn laughingly away.

The sight rather pleased the married sister.

Demonia sat on the veranda alone. It was late. Aunt William had gone to her room and the servants were closing up for the night. The hour was so late Demonia felt sleepy and tired.

Doctor Rolfe had not returned. His absence worried his bride. She bit her red lip in silent wrath. Demonia had a temper. The doctor had never seen her when this was in command. He might have hesitated about proposing had he known.

Presently Demonia sprang up and began pacing the floor. Her eyes were snapping and her cheeks burned.

"Why don't he come?" she said, under her breath. "I wonder if he thinks I am going to stand this sort of treatment? He'll find his mistake pretty sudden if he does."

A footfall met her ear. She turned. Harmonia, white as some swamp wraith, stood in the dim light from the drawing room, facing her.

"What, you up still?" cried the bride.

"Certainly. Why not, Demonia?"

"Why are you keeping such late hours? The captain—has he gone?"

"An hour ago."

"And you——"

"Have been mooning under the trees."

"For him——"

"Don't be silly, Demonia." The tall twin walked across the floor and faced the shadows of the lawn. She was debating her duty in a very worried state of mind. That note from Midget was troubling her. She loved her sister, respected the doctor, and misunderstood her duty.

"He is a fine man, Harmonia," ventured Demonia at length.

"He?"

"Captain Axby of course."

"What do you know about Captain Axby, Deme? You told me you never met him till tonight."

"True; but an hour with such a man learns one much. I like him, and you might learn to love him. In fact, I think you do."

"You are wise beyond your years, Demonia," and the tall twin laughed.

She stood with crossed hands looking into the shadows. Presently she turned and faced her sister with an apprehensive quiver of lip and eye.

"Where is Doctor Rolfe, Demonia?" asked she, in a husky undertone. A thousand evil fancies danced attendance in the brain of the bride's twin.

"I do not know."

"He has not returned, Demonia?"

"He has not."

The bride turned from her tall sister and walked again across the floor of the spacious veranda. Her small hands were clasped tightly, her lips pressing her white teeth fiercely.

"Would you like to know something of his whereabouts, sister mine?"

"Would I?" Demonia turned almost fiercely upon the speaker. "If you know anything, Harm, speak out. I will not be put upon by Rolfe in this way. He has used me shamefully!" The bride's dark eyes snapped, and her face grew red and pale by turns. Her agitation was not to be concealed.

Harmonia still hesitated. She loved her sister. It was hard to believe Doctor Renhart a villain. She had loved him once, before he made love to Demonia. She had trusted him, and had believed he was becoming interested. That was before the man knew the exact status of the sisters financially. Had Demonia's extra fortune won Doctor Renhart from the blonde? Was he a villain? He was all that, Harmonia reasoned, and her heart beat anxiously for the welfare of the wronged bride of less than a month.

"Are you going to speak, Harmonia?" demanded the bride.

"Yes. Here is a partial solution of the mystery, Demonia."

Harmonia handed her sister the letter the doctor had dropped.

Demonia clutched the paper, tore it open and read the note by the light of a dull-glowing lantern. Her face grew pale. She raised her head and said tremulously:

"What does it all mean, Harmonia?"

"It means," returned the tall girl, "that you, Demonia are a deserted wife!"

CHAPTER III.

SIX MONTHS LATER.

Winter had come and gone. Spring violets were peeping from warming mother earth, and all nature was in a state of rejoicing. A woman riding in a carriage along a city boulevard, lifted her head and glanced about as a street news vender was shouting his wares.

"'Ere's yer T-r-i-b-u-n-e, Free P-r-e-ss, Post! All about the Indian Massacre out West!"

Anything pertaining to the West interested the occupant of the carriage. She purchased a paper and began eagerly to scan its contents.

Among the names of those slain by the red outlaws of Wyoming were none she knew. But stay. Here is something of interest.

"Terrible Crime."

The woman read beneath this, words of the deepest import to herself. She was so agitated she could not finish, but ordered the driver to take her home. This was a cottage with four rooms in which Demonia lived since coming to the city with her sister. The latter was now a fashionable milliner, and as many believed, a confirmed spinster.

"You are tired, sister mine," said Harmonia as Demonia entered the front room. "Take off your wraps and lie down for a while."

"I am not tired; why should I be?" demanded the married sister with something of her old superiority. "I will sit by myself for a spell."

Demonia sought a small room under the roof. She flung her wraps on the bed, sighed and sat down. Then she consulted the paper once more.

Her face was whiter than usual when she finished reading that news item from a far Western town. A sigh escaped her lips.

"This is the end," she murmured.

"What is the end, Demonia?"

Harmonia had entered unannounced. She smiled forcibly. Then a shadow chased the smile into darkness. Demonia was restless and thinning in flesh. The tall twin did not like this.

"I wouldn't fret my life out for a villain like Doctor Renhart," she had said.

"It's the uncertainty that's killing me," returned Demonia. This uncertainty was lifted at last. She handed the paper to Harmonia, pointing to the paragraph in which it was stated that one Doctor Rolfe Renhart had been found murdered in his room. The motive for the deed was ascribed to jealousy, without giving particulars.

"Yes, this is the end, and justice has been done at last," remarked the tall sister, tossing the paper from her with a sniff of contempt. Where Doctor Renhart was concerned Harmonia was always scornful. As she had once loved him she now despised. She had tried to wean her sister from remembering. At times she had thought she had succeeded. Today she learned differently.

The announcement of her false husband's death was distinctly a shock to Demonia. However, this would soon pass, and then the old, happy days would be with them again. Harmonia suppressed her glad feelings with an effort.

"He has met up with human justice at any rate, Demon——"

"For heaven's sake, hush!" exclaimed the other. A look of exquisite pain shot across her face.

Harmonia sprang up and busied herself about the room. She folded tne paper and thrust it into a drawer.

How could a woman love a man who had acted as had Doctor Renhart?

This was the query that was puzzling the tall twin.

"It seems perfectly awful!" exclaimed Demonia.

"Now don't make any fuss over that villain, Demonia. He isn't worth it."

"You do not know every point in his case, Harmonia," said the other, with a suppressed groan. "If I could have seen him once more. Maybe he could have explained everything. To think—but I must not think."

"That's right, Deme, you must not think where he is concerned. Rather bless your stars that you are free to marry again. The captain——"

"Hush, woman!"

Demonia menaced her sister with clinched hand. At another time Harmonia would have laughed outright. It pained her to see the sad face of her sister. However, the news borne by that paper gladdened rather than saddened the taller maid. It was simple justice. Harmonia quitted the room and went below. Business was not pressing at tne shop, and as she had plenty of help, Harmonia remained at home most of the day.

Demonia kept close to her room all day.

When night fell, after the early dinner, Demonia appeared in the cottage parlor, grip in hand, ready for a journey. Harmonia gasped.

"What in the world!" she exclaimed.

"I am going out there, Harmonia,' said Demonia, softly.

"Going where, Demy?"

"To Tiger City, where he is."

"Nonsense!"

"You can manage till I get back. I may not be long gone."

"Goodness me!" exclaimed Harmonia, asserting herself. "You aren't going one step, not a step. Good heavens! you'd look well wouldn't you? You are my sister and I have some rights let me tell you."

Harmonia was very emphatic. She was not, panting, like one in disease.

"Don't, Harm."

"Yes I shall. Take off your things and go back to your room."

"No, Harm, I am going as I tell you."

Demonia moved across the floor. She stood án instant by the glass door. Someone was approaching from the street—a man with a dark face and elegant figure. One glance sufficed. Demonia retreated. She quitted the room just as the bell rang.

Harmonia sprang up and pulled wide the door. She greeted her caller with a smile. He stood a moment, hat in hand on the threshold

"Your sister," he began.

"Yes, she is in and will see you. Please step in and sit down."

The gentleman did as requested. Harmonia did not call her sister immediately. She liked the company of Captain Axby, and was a bit jealous of Demonia. If the captain was money greedy he might choose the widow rather than the prettier spinster.

They talked of the weather, the opera and other little nothings. At length Captain Axby inquired for Demonia.

"I have news for the poor child," said he.

"What can it be? Nothing alarming I trust?" said Harmonia.

"Instead it will prove a relief. Perhaps I had better tell you and then you can break it gently to her. I know how sensitive Demonia is about one thing."

"About Doctor Rolfe?"

"Yes."

"Ah, then your news is of him?"

"It is. The doctor is dead."

The captain stood up, drawing on his gloves once more. He told this girl all about the telegraphic news from Tiger City, where the doctor had met death at the hands of an assassin. Harmonia listened as if it was all new to her The maiden's eyes glistened, however, and her heart fluttered.

This news left Demonia free. Was the captain pleased? It would seem so. There was unmistakable elation in his tone.

Harmonia was restless and angry. Angry more at herself than at either the captain or Demonia. Why should she care if these two did love each other? Her own heart had never been touched but once, and the inciter of that was now dead in a wild Western town.

Had you not better speak with Demonia," suggested the girl.

"Not tonight——"

"I wish you would," said Harmonia pleadingly. "She is wild to run off West to where he lies dead. You might persuade her against such idiocy."

"It would be idiocy, indeed!" exclaimed the captain. "Call your sister and I will try and reason with her."

The captain of the guards seated himself once more. Harmonia went in search of her sister. She returned very soon, looking hot and angry. The captain sprang up.

"Is she coming?" he asked.

"No, she is not. I was unable to find her. I think she has slipped out and gone. She is headstrong when once aroused."

"I am well aware of that," with a laugh.

"She seemed very much stirred by the news of her husband's death," pursued Harmonia. "It was a decided shock to sister."

"It ought to have been."

"No. To me it would have been a relief. The man was a villain."

"Yes, a scamp of the first water. I knew him well. I tried to warn your poor sister but she would not listen."

"No. Demonia is a very obstinate woman."

Harmonia felt the hot blood sweeping her face as the keen eyes of the captain regarded her.

"But this is so foolish on her part," said Harmonia, referring to the plan of her sister to go West. "He will be buried long before she can get there."

"Of course. I wish you had let me see her——"

"It is not too late now. The Northwestern train goes in twenty minutes. You have time to intercept her, Captain Axby!"

"By heaven! that's exactly what I shall do!" and the officer turned with scant courtesy and dashed from the room.

CHAPTER IV.

Captain Axby stepped upon the train as it was moving from the depot. He went through the coaches in search of Demonia. He did not find her. Surely this was the train she ought to take.

The captain bit his lip and pondered. What should he do now? The queer little widow had given him the slip neatly enough.

She was avoiding him at ever turn. He realized this and had been for a time content to comfort himself by social calls on Harmonia, instead.

The captain got off at the first station and hired a man to take him back to the city. He went once more to see Harmonia. He found her in her business place, and in no mood to entertain a handsome gentleman.

Harmonia, was, however, very anxious about her sister. Thus she deigned to speak with the natty captain of the guards.

"I did not find her," he said.

"You missed the train?"

"No."

She regarded him keenly. She had long since decided in her own mind that Captain Jubal Axby was not a truthful man. He seemed to conceal facts often in order to secure a point of vantage. Harmonia did not like this trait in the man. She sometimes wondered at her toleration.

"Why did you not find Demonia?" asked finally.

"She did not take the train for the We

"Then where is she?"

"I wish I knew." He smiled half-hearte ly, and studied a hat in one of the sho cases.

"She has deceived us both."

"I don't know. Why should she care to do that?"

Harmonia was called to attend a customer and the captain did not pursue his investigation further. He went upon the street, lit a cigar and stepped briskly away.

"I think I'll find her still in the city," he muttered, chewing the end of his cigar. "She's a bit flighty just now over that piece in the paper. When she has recovered from that my chances will improve."

Meantime, Demonia was speeding westward as fast as the steam horse could plow the atmosphere. As it happened she had taken a train on another road than the one her friend the captain had expected.

The feelings of the young wife, now a widow, were very much mixed. She had loved the man she married. His heartless desertion, without a word of explanation, had shocked her to the heart. It was not easy to unlearn. At times she chided herself for giving the runaway a second thought.

That short honeymoon had been a happy one. The honey had been very sweet and comforting. The vinegar afterward was more than sour. Demonia was a changed woman. Sometimes she hated the name of Rolfe Renhart. In this she was aided by Captain Axby.

The captain was a very disinterested friend of both husband and wife. At least he posed as such. Demonia did not take wholly to him or his fawning manners. Now that her husband was dead she would keep away from the captain utterly. She sometimes hated herself for her friendly treatment of him.

That rail journey to that far West was a sad and tedious one.

It was night when Tiger City was reached Demonia alighted on a dark platform, at a dingy station, and stood lonely and alone under the weeping Montana sky.

The weather was in sympathy with her sorrowful mission.

"Yes, there's the North Star," said the station agent, when the solitary passenger appealed to him for accomodations. "It's the best hotel in Tiger City, which, however, ain't saying much. Wait a second, madam, and I'll show you across."

The man's "second" proved to be a half hour during which time Demonia sat in the dingy waiting room, filled with musty smells and, listened to the fall of the spring rain.

"This way, Miss," and the little man of tickets stepped into the room bearing a lantern. Demonia grasped her bag and followed. Her companion relieved her of the grip and led the way into outer darkness.

Across a muddy street he went, then for several blocks along a damp and glistening sidewalk. Entering a narrow door, he led the way to the upper regions of a two-story, wooden structure, and ushered Demonia into a square, carpeted room, which had a less forbiding appearance than the outside.

"Here you are, Miss," said the man, turning on the kerosene lamp that hung at the side of the room, to a higher glow. "I will take your name down to the office, and if you want supper——"

"No supper, thank you, only a room and a chance to rest."

"All right," with a smile. "What name, please?"

"D. Renhart," said the traveler.

"Renhart!" the man started and regarded her face keenly. He excused his rudeness a moment later saying. "The name sounded familiar. A poor chap by that name was killed three days ago. No relation of yours I hope?"

"He may be," said Demonia, white, yet calm. "I have a friend named Renhart, a doctor——"

"Well, well and he was a doctor, too!"

Demonia, who was sitting, rose quickly and came to the side of the station master. Her small, freckled face shone white and agitated as she took his arm and questioned him about the man he knew.

"He was a good sort," acknowledged the man. "I wasn't personally acquainted, but I've seen him lots."

"Tell me about him, please."

The girl's voice sounded faint and far away.

"There ain't much to tell, Miss," said the man. "The doc was kind of a professional man, lookin' after the health of the miners, cuttin' when it was needed. He made some enemies of course."

"Go on."

Demonia set her teeth and was overwhelmed with a great calm.

"Most of folks liked Doctor Renhart, but there was some that didn't."

"Yes, of course."

"And it was one of them last that blotted him out."

"He was murdered?" The words sounded hollow and far away to the speaker.

"Well, yes, that's what they say."

"Three days ago?"

"To be exact 'twas three days and a half, madam. Was the doc your brother? I know he had relatives some'rs near here."

"The body. Where is it?" questioned Demonia, unheeding the query of the other.

"Oh, that was cared for, of course."

"Yes, but where? I would see it," cried Demonia, moistening her dry lips in hopeles pain.

"Oh, as to that, you can't see him. He was planted up with the others who go to make the Tiger City cemetery. They was good to him, Miss. We don't allow no Potter's field here in Montana."

Demonia recoiled. The words and voice of her informant were callous in the extreme. She sat down and covered her face with her hands.

"Now don't take it so hard, Miss," said the man. "He ain't suffering anyhow. He sleeps as peaceful as a babe. Of course, it was bad to have him go in such a way; but most of 'em peter out without much sickness. I can send someone to show you his grave in the morning, Miss. It won't be no trouble at all." The man tried to seem sympathetic. His voice came low and crooning. Demonia lifted her face, brushing something aside with bitter self-reproach. What right had she to feel like this? The dead man was not worthy a single tear. He had deserted her. He had been a villain and a coward.

"It's tough to lose a brother——" began the ticket seller.

"He was my husband, sir."

Demonia sat back and regarded the man with quiet dignity. He stood staring as if startled.

"Your husband!" he exclaimed, then stood like a frightened school-boy, mumbling unintelligible words under his breath.

"Yes. Anything strange in that?" demanded Demonia defiantly. She was ready to acknowledge the relationship now that he was dead. Alive she would have scorned him.

"Well, I don't exactly know. It don't seem quite right, Mrs. Doc," said the man, in a halting way that puzzled his listener. He turned to walk out. Demonia detained him with a question.

"You knew Doctor Renhart. Was there anything bad about him?"

"No, ma'am, I can't say there was—that is, unless——"

"Unless what?"

"Unless his bein' much married is wrong."

"Much married! What do you mean?"

Something like ice dropped into the heart of the speaker. Was the secret of her late husband's sudden flight about to be revealed? Her flesh grew cold and she trembled inwardly. She felt weak and sick. She must be brave now if never again. She rallied her shrinking faculties.

"Well, there was a woman at the funeral—his wife she called herself. She is a mighty pretty female, and——"

"Sir, are you telling the truth?" demanded Demonia sharply.

"I've no call to lie, ma'am."

This was certainly true. Demonia felt ashamed of her outburst.

"Where is this woman—the one calling herself his wife?' she asked in an undertone. Chilled and troubled though she was, Demonia resolved to hold herself together hereafter.

The man said he did not know where the widow was at present. He bade her good night and quitted the room. Demonia sank down moaning pitifully.

"Oh, why did I ever come? I am a pitiful fool!"

CHAPTER V.

A night and a day Demonia remained at Tiger City

Nobody knew of her mission save the ticket agent, and he, for a wonder kept her secret. At mid-afternoon of a warm April day she stood by a new, dirt mound on a high spur of ground overlooking a long stretch of valley.

There was a soothing calm in the sweet silence. Beneath her the village curled skyward. The valley was bathed in brightness. the female figure standing where the sunrays touched it was not imposing.

The mound at her feet was unmarked save for a pine slab at the head on which the name "Doc Renhart" was scrawled in pencil.

Demonia did not weep. She thought of that other one who had claimed to be the dead man's wife. Her disgraceful position wrankled her soul.

How had she misread this man. His reward had overtaken him in the midst of his sins. She had been a fool for ever setting out to find this.

The thud of swift feet fretted the air. Someone approached from the opposite side of the flat ground on which the cemetery lay. A woman riding a mustang. Tall, dark and handsome she looked as she reined her steed to a stand scare three yards distant.

The rider dismounted and approached. She threw up her veil and regarded the solitary figure beside the newly heaped dirt.

"Did you know him?" she asked, pointing to the fresh grave.

The speaker was tall, sinewy and graceful, with thin, dark face and eyes as dark as sloes.

"Yes, I knew him," informed Demonia.

"I did not see you at the funeral."

"I was not here at that time."

"Who are you?"

"A stranger in the land," said Demonia, reading the stranger's face with close scrutiny. She guessed who the woman was. She made no haste to seek an acquaintance, however.

"Tell me your name, please."

There was a softer cadence in the stranger's voice. Demonia no longer felt repelled.

"Demonia Peprys. Who are you?" said the girl, slowly.

"I am Eulene Renhart."

"This man's relative—his sister, perhaps?" Demonia nearly choked with a sudden sweep of memory. That short courtship and three weeks of Heaven following her marriage swept over her. She tottered a little, but bravely overcame her emotion and faced her duty with compressed lip and calm outward appearance.

"I am his widow," said the tall brunette, "and you are——"

"A friend."

Demonia turned from the spot. The woman followed her with her gaze. What she saw was a small, ladylike young person, with red hair and freckled face. Not a beauty by any means. She showed no sign of jealousy.

"You knew Doctor Renhart," called the woman. "Don't go. Let's talk about him. He was almost a stranger to me when I married him."

"Was he, indeed?"

Demonia turned about and waited for the other to approach. Demonia's heart was sore. She felt the need of rest, of forgetfulness, yet she wanted to learn something of his sin. This woman could enlighten her. She would listen if it cut her to the soul. She wished to be lenient, to forgive if not to forget. The temptation to hear all this person might say was too strong to be resisted. After all, this clay beneath that newly heaped earth might not be her Doctor Rolfe.

"I married Doctor Rolfe Renhart six months or more ago. There was no honeymoon, no-nothing, only sorrow and distress following a mad marriage. He deserted me almost at the altar. I thought I loved him. When he died I dropped a tear to his memory and went away. Was I wicked or cruel?"

"I cannot judge."

"What would you do if you married a man, who promised to devote his life to making you happy, and then deserted you in three hours after the ceremony?"

Demonia shuddered. How like her own case. And the same man was the guilty party in both events. It was shocking. The tall, dark woman went on:

"You need not answer. Such things only happen to silly girls not to women of sense such as you."

"I am not sure," murmured Demonia. She had schooled herself to unwonted calmness. "Yours is indeed a sad case."

"As I once loved, I hated the man and his wiles. When I heard that he was dead I rejoiced. I came to the funeral, however, and shall claim his property as his lawful wife. Am I wrong in doing this?"

"I cannot tell. Are you sure that you are his widow?"

A terrible suspicion had entered the soul of Demonia. One of these had good cause to hate the dead man lying at their feet. Which was it?

"I am sure of that. Do you want the proof?"

The young woman spoke almost fiercely. From her bosom she produced a folded paper and opened it for Demonia to read. This proved to be a marriage certificate, dated some months previously. Demonia read it, the names of Rolfe Renhart and Eulene Fransway burning like red hot iron into her soul.

And the date of that duly witnessed document was some weeks prior to her own marriage to the same man. Her own certificate was back in the East from whence she had come. Demonia shrank and shriveled under the knowledge that this paper held by Mrs. Renhart revealed.

"You see, I was his lawful wife," said Eulene, grimly.

"I see," asserted Demonia, scarcely breathing.

"And I mean to look up his past. If he left property it belongs to me. He posed as a rich Chicago lumberman's son. He may have lied. What can you tell me about him?"

The black eyes of Eulene pierced Demonia. The latter recoiled, shrinking within herself as though she were unfit to live.

"I—I can really tell you nothing," faltered Demonia, chilling under the words and gaze of the other.

"Yes you can. You said you was Doctor Renhart's friend."

"Did I?" helplessly.

"You certainly did. Tell me something about him."

The woman was persistent. Demonia began to feel her old self returning. Her sinning husband was dead. She was a free woman now to choose her future course in life. Nobody should dictate to her, not even this handsome young Western pythoness who called herself the dead man's widow.

"I can tell you nothing other than that you already know," said Demonia, turning haughtily away.

"I will not have it so. You must tell me!" cried the other, seizing the arm of Demonia, pinching till a cry escaped her. The red flamed in the girl's cheek as she bent her head and fastened her white teeth in the slim hand of Eulene Renhart.

The dark beauty dropped her grip on Demonia's arm and started back with a cry of pain.

The wronged wife darted then toward the town.

"A sharp-bitten cat!" moaned Eulene, looking after the fleeing one. "She was his friend. She is my enemy. Miss Demon Peprys, you have not seen the last of me. I hate you—hate you!"

Thus had Demonia made an enemy who was to bring much trouble into the young girl's after life. She went back to the hotel, paid her bill and returned to the depot to await an eastern bound train.

The waiting room held but a single occupant besides herself, a man who half crouched in one corner of the room looking fixedly into space.

The man had a forbidding aspect. The upper part of his face was marred by a livid scar that crossed from eyebrow to ear. The effect of a recent wound which served to draw the eyelid awry. The lower face was covered with a long pointed, red beard.

In dress the man appeared to be above his surroundings. Demonia gave him only a cursory glance, then fell into meditation.

"Hello!"

A sudden ejaculation from the stranger called her attention again to the man in the corner. He had turned half about and was staring directly at her. His gaze was rude in the extreme. Demonia felt it and was annoyed.

The strange man rose and approached her. Demonia faced him with a sudden twinge of fear.

"Mrs. Renhart, I am glad to see you."

The stranger extended his hand. Demonia started and blushed burning red.

"Excuse me," she said. "I do not know you."

His hand dropped as though made of lead. A sudden pained expression swept his face. After a moment of hesitancy he turned and went back to his corner. He sat down again and was silent. Demonia was satisfied to let him remain in undisturbed possession of his corner. There was something appealing in the man's eyes. They were deep and liquid wells of dumb hopelessness. Aside from his handsome eyes the man was hideous and repellant.

What surprised Demonia, was that he knew her name. How should he know that she was the widow of the dead doctor? This was a puzzle. She almost regretted repulsing his advances. His voice had not been harsh but appealing and earnest.

She caught him regarding her furtively a moment later.

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(Continued on page fourteen.)

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CHAPTER VIII.

ONE TERRIBLE QUESTION.

"You want to speak to me alone," said Mrs. Bradbury, in the tone of one making a challenge.

She seated herself and looked at the detective with a supercilious lifting of her eyebrows.

"Just so," said Keeneyes, sitting down without waiting for her permission.

Mrs. Bradbury rose indignantly.

"What do you want?" she asked sharply.

"Only that you answer me one question."

"I am getting dinner. I have left things which need my immediate attention. I cannot stay here to talk with you. Speak quickly, if you speak to me at all."

"As quickly as you please," rejoined the detective.

He rose also. "You will agree to answer one question? Just one poor little question?"

"I will have nothing to do with this mystery-case nor will I be dragged into it, in any way. I did not want my husband to meddle with it; I knew it would bring annoyances and impertinences."

"Just so, my dear madam. But you will answer one question—only one?"

"Why must I be questioned at all? Who am I, to be subjected to this—this——"

"This impertinence?" said Keeneyes. "Who are you? Why, my dear madam, you are the wife of the most eminent physician of Little Brook and, I am sure, are highly estimable on your own account. I am nothing but a detective. Pray do not look upon me as a human being, as a gentleman, or as an impertinence. Regard me as a piece of furniture—anything; nothing—but pray in cause of justice and humanity, answer my one question."

"I know nothing that could be of service to justice or humanity. I have not come into my own parlor to be questioned by a stranger."

"Then allow me to make an observation in your hearing."

"I shall do as I please," retorted the other, fiercely, "and of course I shall make no attempt to prevent you from doing as you please."

"I find this quite disagreeable," sighed Keeneyes. "We are not making an attractive scene—do you think?"

"I will return to my work," said Mrs. Bradbury.

"One moment. You refuse to answer my question. Then, hear my observation. It is this: The wheelbarrow that passed through the side gate, bore the woman whose arm is yonder on the mantel-piece."

"I do not understand you," gasped Mrs. Bradbury, chokingly. "I do not understand you. What do you mean?"

"But why are you so pale?" inquired Keeneyes, pitlessly. "Why do you tremble so? Why do your eyes stare? Sit down in this chair, my dear madam, you are faint!"

"What do you mean?" cried the lady. "Leave this room, sir!"

"As you please," said the detective, starting away.

"No," said Mrs. Bradbury, convulsively, "no, stay! I must ask you——"

"Pardon me, my dear Mrs. Bradbury. Since you refuse to answer my question, do not be offended if I follow the example of such a distinguished member of society."

"I must ask you to explain what you mean," she faltered.

"I mean exactly what I said. The corpse on the wheelbarrow——"

"What corpse? Explain yourself!"

"Will you answer my question?"

"What is the question?" she panted.

"That, at least, is quite an advance which we have made," said Keeneyes, with satisfaction, "since you are now ready to hear what the question is. Allow me to still farther make the way clear for you, by assuring you that I already know the correct answer to my question. I am not asking it of you for information.

"No, indeed. If I could not find out what is needful to know, without asking questions,I would give up my business.

"So, as I say, remember I know that whereof I now ask.

"You will say, then why ask it?

"For two reasons, my dear madam.

"In the first place I wish to convince you that I know already all the essentials of this mystery-case. In brief, it is no mystery to me, whatever.

"Some nonessentials I do not know, of course. I am but human after all."

"You tell me," gasped the young wife, gripping the side of her chair, and glaring at the detective, "that you know the mystery?"

"I do."

"What do you know?" she asked, quickly, yet as if afraid of his reply.

Keeneyes pointed at the glass case on the mantel.

He said: "I know whose arm that is."

"Impossible!" gasped Mrs. Bradbury.

"I know how it came in the smoking-room," continued Keeneyes, "and I know why it was left there."

"Why? why? why?"

"Ah, you overwhelm me with questions, and I have not yet put my one inquiry!

"Now, madam, I know the answer to my question. In the first place, I ask it to prove that I know all; and in the second place, to test your good faith. Are you ready for the question?"

He looked at her like a judge on the bench.

"What is the question?" she faltered.

"It is this: Where did you bury your sister's corpse?"

CHAPTER IX.

THE QUESTION IS UNANSWERED.

For a moment Mrs. Bradbury staggered and seemed about to fall.

The question which the detective had just put to her, although spoken in a low and cautious voice, seemed still ringing in the room, namely——

"Where did you bury your sister's corpse?"

The white face of the young and beautiful wife of old Doctor Bradbury, wavered.

Then the form of the mistress of the house grew statuesque.

Her hands were on the back of her chair.

She leaned slightly upon them.

There was deadly silence in the room.

Then Mrs. Bradbury spoke in a voice that was carefully repressed. She said: "You are crazy!"

"In that case," said Keeneyes, "you can make allowances for anything I may say or do."

"You are crazy!" she repeated more loudly. "I say, you are a madman!"

"But like most madmen," observed the detective, "I linger under the delusion that I am sane. Indeed, I seem to myself to be perfectly sane when I ask you where you buried your sister's corpse."

"If you were sane, you would not dare to ask me such a question! I bury a corpse? I? Wretch! I have no sister. I was an only child. I have never had a sister. If I had a brother, you should pay for your insult!"

"I am ready to pay for it," said Keeneyes, "whenever you want the account closed."

"Leave this house instantly, and forever!"

"But my dear madam, I cannot leave this house forever. The body of your sister is buried out in the garden, and it will be necessary to exhume it. When you wheeled it from Clarence Bradbury's house in the wheelbarrow through the side gate——"

"It is a lie!" Mrs. Bradbury hissed. "I have no sister. It is a lie, a wicked lie, and —and malicious!"

"But not of felonious intent," rejoined Keeneyes, in his comfortable voice. "Now, my dear madam——"

At that moment they both heard Doctor Bradbury and Mayor White step out of the physician's smoking-room, into the hall.

"Your husband is coming," said Keeneyes, rapidly.

"He will be here in a moment.

"I know all.

"Shall I tell him?

"Do you wish him to know of that corpse in his garden?

"Do you wish him to know of that wheelbarrow—and the side gate?

"Qiuck! You must decide now!

"You must decide before he reaches that door.

"Shall I tell him?"

Mrs. Bradbury drew her form rigidly erect.

"You have lost your mind," she said in a low, but cold voice. "If you know anything, it is your duty to tell it. That is what you are hired for. Wretch! are you trying to make terms with me?"

Doctor Bradbury looked through the doorway.

He said genially: "Well, Mr. Detective, have you and my wife had time to gossip about our neighbors, at sufficient length?"

"I am not entirely satisfied," said Keeneyes.

Then he turned to the wife and asked: "Are you quite sure you have nothing more to add?"

"I have told you nothing," said the other, distinctly, "and I have nothing to tell. I will return to my cooking." She left the room abruptly, keeping her face averted from her husband.

The three men were once more seated in the room.

"Now," said the old gentleman, "you have taken a look at the scenes of action, Mr. Detective. When will you be ready to go to work?"

Keeneyes darted a look at the mayor and saw that the official had discretely retained all the facts of the morning's demonstration.

The detective was pleased. He smiled.

"You ask me when shall I be ready to go to work? My dear doctor, my work is practically finished."

"Finished!" echoed the physician.

The mayor, with a look of intense admiration at his friend, nodded his head approvingly.

"Do you mean this mystery of the arm—"

Keeneyes waved his hand, saying: "That is no mystery to me, sir."

Doctor Bradbury blinked his eyes rapidly, and gasped.

Keeneyes continued: "Now, before I tell you what I have found out, I wish to ask you a few questions."

"As many as you please. I only wish I could tell something of importance."

"But you can, you can!"

"No," said the other, ruefully, "I am quite at sea."

"Doctor Bradbury," spoke up the mayor, "if Mr. Keeneyes asks you questions, you may be sure he is not doing it for pastime. He knows what he is about. I thought I knew nothing, but he wormed several facts out of me. Mr. Keeneyes is no child. He—"

At this moment the mayor remembered the hole in his worn coat, and carelessly clapped his hand over it.

"I wish to ask you, doctor, something about your bachelor brother, Clarence Bradbury."

"He will be here Saturday."

"So I am told. But why wait till Saturday for what you can tell me now? How did he lose his fortune?"

"He speculated, I understand. In fact, Clarence did not confide in me relative to his money affairs. Naturally he was sensitive about it, after the money was gone, and I did not care to probe the wound with needless curiosity."

"You do not then, really know how he lost his modest fortune?"

"I know only that he said in a general way that he had speculated and that every cent of it was gone."

"Very good. Thank you. I appreciate your frankness."

"Why, indeed," said the other, in surprise, "it is a pleasure to tell you everything I know; though my brother's affairs cannot in any way bear upon whose arm was found in his smoking-room."

Keeneyes waved his hand elegantly and crossed his long legs. The mayor took an admiring squint at the intent, dark and handsome lean face.

"Doctor," said Keeneyes, "I understand that your brother has taken charge of your niece, since—since how long?"

"Since an infant," said the other. "Clarence and I had one sister, who married and went to California and just as Clarence became of age. You know there is twenty year's difference in the ages of Clarence and me."

"Pray tell me more about this sister."

"Sister Youley married a Californian, by name Grigsby. She and Clarence, being about the same age, were almost inseparable. I, being somewhat weaned, as you may say, from my own people. Neither Clarence or I ever saw sister Youley, again. She died, she and her husband, about thirteen years ago, leaving a little girl, our niece, Youley, then about two or three—no, four, I think."

"Clarence Bradbury went to California after her?" inquired Keeneyes.

"It was not necessary. There were no near relatives on the Grisby side. The minister put the little charge on the cars in charge of the conductor, and Clarence met her at the Union Station in Kansas City."

"And brought her here?"

"Yes, sir, brought her here to Little Brook."

At this moment, Mrs. Bradbury appeared at the door in a dainty little white apron, and stood listening.

"She did not come to your house, doctor?"

"No. I offered to keep the child. But, you see, Clarence, being a bachelor, and lonely, wanted the child, himself. In fact, he was perfectly infatuated with little Youley—she was named after her mother."

"Her mother, I presume," observed Keeneyes, "was born on a Christmas day?"

"Just so. Hence the name."

"Exactly. And so Clarence kept her in his bachelor home?"

"He did. When she was old enough, he had a governess and all kinds of foolishness, and when she was only fourteen or thereabouts, he had her off to a fashionable boarding-school. She has some talent in music, and he is developing it. In the meantime he lost his fortune."

"But he did not want you to help bear her expenses?"

"He would not hear to such a thing."

"You have told me much," said Keeneyes, "and now I will tell you even more. I pray you, my dear Mrs. Bradbury, to come in and hear about the woman whose arm was cut off. Do you know, doctor, that I know perfectly well where that woman is at this moment?"

"What!"

"Oh, yes, and how she came there."

"Incredible!"

Even the mayor was amazed at Keeneyes' assertion, but he did not regard him with a skeptic's eye. He was ready to subscribe to any word that might fall from the detective's lips.

Mrs. Bradbury drew a chair where the room was partially in shadow, and seated herself somewhat heavily.

CHAPTER X.

THE CORPSE OF ONLY ONE ARM.

There was painful and oppressive silence in the room.

Doctor Bradbury, Mayor White and Mrs. Bradbury waited to hear what the detective might have to disclose.

Keeneyes hesitated.

It was still his desire to give the lady what he looked upon as one more chance at escape. But how could he help this young wife who so determinedly defied him? who so emphatically denied all knowledge of the mystery?

He began slowly. "In the first place, I must tell you that, just at present, it is not my wish to reveal all that I have learned. I will tell you a little story."

"Oh, Mr. Detective," cried the mayor, nervously, "It is almost time for Mrs. Bradbury's dinner!"

"Exactly so, my dear mayor. Now there was once a detective of my acquaintance, not a very bright one, for he dealt entirely too much in nonessentials. However, as it happened, he did know all about a particular case.

"He was on the eve of explaining everything, when a lady whom he was about to implicate, came into the room. Let us call her Mrs. Smith."

"Is she connected with our mystery case?" the mayor ventured.

"Why, of course, she is! Would I tell about her if she were not?"

"But who is this Mrs. Smith?" demanded the physician, in perplexity.

"She is merely illustrative matter, my dear doctor, just illustrative matter. Now Mrs Smith came into the room when the detective was upon the eve of revealing a startling tale of blood. Now, as it happened it was in Mrs. Smith's power to render this detective a signal service. So he whispered to the guilty lady and said:

"'Madam, if you will overturn your chair, it will be a signal to me that you agree to my terms, namely to perform a great service for me, and in that case I will not betray you.'

"Thus my friend, the detective. But the lady did not believe he could betray her, so she did not overturn her chair. The detective began to tell about the case, and presently the lady found that he could betray her, after all, and in great agitation she did overturn her chair. So the detective only told part of his story, and spared the lady, who afterwards performed the service for him; not a difficult service, at all, but a delicate one.

"I think it makes a good story.

„That is why I am telling it to you."

"I was just wondering, why," murmured the mayor.

"But you were about to tell us of our mystery-case," Doctor Bradbury interposed, impatiently, "and I confess that it is a thousand times more interesting to me than this case of an unknown Mrs. Smith."

"Then pardon me; I proceed at once to the point. Now, my dear doctor, if you should go out into your garden with the intention of hoeing or digging for exercise, and if you will go over to the northwest corner where those stones are scattered, with the dead brush upon them—you know the place I mean?"

"Yes," said the physician, in surprise, "it is directly under the hard-maple, and so densely shaded that nothing will grow in that spot, hence nothing is ever planted there."

"Ordinarily, I grant you nothing is ever planted there. Yet sometimes something is planted there. But I must speak in simpler terms. Let us say buried. Now, I was supposing a case. You go out into the garden with your spade, let us say. You wander to this bosky nook of your really creditable garden. It is very nicely weeded. And your asparagus-bed is most promising. But I have left you standing with your spade. You pull away the brush and scrape the stones to one side. You begin to dig. Do you never do so for exercise?"

"I am fond of my garden work," said the other. "In moderation, it is better than any tonic."

"You are right. I too, delight in garden work, though my pleasure is, I fear, rather professional. I take pleasure in tracing and destroying the moles that venture upon my ground. Do you know, moles sometimes call forth the best energies and skill of a detective!

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Doctor Bradbury laughed. "I wish I could afford a detective to look after mine," he said.

Keeneyes said to himself: "Doctor Bradbury is an innocent man!"

Mrs. Bradbury sat like a statue.

"You dig," Keeneyes continued. "You find it easy work. In fact, the earth is quite loose. You wonder. You say to yourself, 'Why is this ground so easily spaded?'

"Down you go, deeper and deeper. By-and-by the blade of your spade strikes against something that is not earth. What can it be? It is not particularly hard. You scrape away the dirt. What do you see? I am not sure. It may be a woman's foot. It may be another arm such as that upon the mantlepiece. At any rate, working now with feverish haste, you exhume a woman's corpse a human body with only one arm!"

"Mr. Detective," the physician remonstrated, "Why do you put such an unpleasant case? It makes my blood cold to hear you. You narrate your little fable in such a way that it seems only too real."

"Real?" cried the detective. "Of course it is real! Would I occupy your time with fables?"

"What do you mean?" gasped Doctor Bradbury.

"I mean," said Keeneyes, emphatically, "that the body of the mutilated form of the young woman is buried in your garden, just as I have said, and if you will go there with me, we will dig it up!"

With an exclamation of horror, Doctor Bradbury rose to his feet.

The mayor, more active, jumped from his chair with a word of excited surprise.

Mrs. Bradbury also started up. In doing so, her hand pushed against the back of the chair.

"Allow me to pick up your chair," said Keeneyes, with most unwonted gallantry.

"Thank you," said Mrs. Bradbury, brokenly.

Keeneyes looked into her eyes significantly, but her glance quailed before him.

At that moment the door-bell rang.

Keeneyes picked up the overthrown chair as Doctor Bradbury went to the door.

All went into the hall.

"Is this Doctor Bradbury," asked a man's voice.

"It is," said Doctor Bradbury, in extreme agitation, "but I can see no one on business now. I am upon the eve of a horrible discovery."

"My business will not wait," said the man, pushing himself into the hall.

"Why, is this you, Mr. Pump?" Keeneyes exclaimed. "I was expecting a detective presently, but I did not suspect it would be you. Come along! We are going out into the garden to dig."

"Is this a detective?" the mayor demanded, looking at the aggressive, much whiskered face of the stranger.

"Yes; allow me to present him."

"But Mr. Keeneyes, you are the only detective the corporation has called in."

"I am not any corporation's detective, said Mr. Pump, loftily. "I am here on business of my own, I thank you!"

"I will give you all the help I can," said Keeneyes kindly.

"Thank you; but I shall not need any help."

"Then you are a different Pump from the detective I met in the Wyndenham case," remarked Keeneyes, less kindly.

"That case was covered up because you married Henrietta Wyndenham," snapped Mr. Pump, "and therfore it is scarcely becoming in you to cast reflections upon me."

"I beg your pardon," said Keeneyes, promptly. "And so you have not come here to find out anything about the woman whose arm was cut off?"

"I don't know whether I have or not," said the second detective. "That remains to be seen."

Keeneyes smiled grimly. "Very well," he said. "Come out to the garden with us, Pump, and see what I am about to unearth. Things don't remain very long to be seen when I am interested in a case!"

"Come, come!" cried Doctor Bradbury, in the utmost impatience.

They went into the garden. Doctor Bradbury carried a spade, but when they reached the shaded spot, he handed the spade to Keeneyes.

"You have heard of the dead arm, Pump, haven't you?" Keeneyes inquired, as he struck away the dead brush.

"It is in all the papers.

"Well, I just came to town this morning, and I am now about to dig up the woman whose arm was cut off."

"Impossible!" cried Pump.

"No it isn't," said the mayor. "If he says he'll do it, he'll do it."

"I say it," Keeneyes smiled.

Mrs. Bradbury stood leaning against the tree, her fingers gripping together. Each in that scene, except of course, Keeneyes, was too excited and too tense with grewsome expectation, to notice the manner of the others.

As Keeneyes dug deeper, all except Mrs. Bradbury crowded to the margin of the clearing. She remained leaning against the sugar-maple.

Suddenly an exclamation burst from the mayor of Little Brook.

There had been exposed to view the human stump from which an arm had been severed. Keeneyes softly sifted the black earth back upon the mutilated remains.

He said: "Before we go any farther, we should have the coroner here, and more witnesses."

"Horrible, horrible!" muttered Doctor Bradbury. "Here in my own garden! Here, almost at my very door!"

Mrs. Bradbury, white and rigid, spoke no word.

The old man went over to her and put his arm about her. "Bear up, my pet," he whispered, "bear up!"

"Pump," said Keeneyes, "will you run and bring the coroner? It will simplyfy matters amazingly. And an undertaker. Get a coffin. I'll stand for it."

"No," said Pump, "you can't expect me to leave this spot. As a professional detective, my services are required here."

"Oh, very well," Said Keeneyes. "Then you stand guard, and I'll go, myself. My dear doctor, had you not better help your wife back into the house? This is no place for ladies!"

CHAPTER XI.

THE DETECTIVE'S MANEUVER.

In due course of time, Keeneyes returned with the coroner to the garden of Doctor Bradbury.

They were followed by most of the male citizens of the town. It is not our purpose to delay our narrative as the ensuing events were delayed.

An inquest was held.

It was given as the verdict of the jury that the woman exhumed from the doctor's was the one from whom the arm had been severed; the arm, namely, which the bachelor brother, Clarence Bradbury, had found in his smoking-room.

That, after the arm had been severed from the body, the corpse had been removed to Doctor Bradbury's garden by means, probably, of a wheelbarrow, as a single track under the side gate, pointed out by the detective, seemed to indicate—a track likewise found under the back gate.

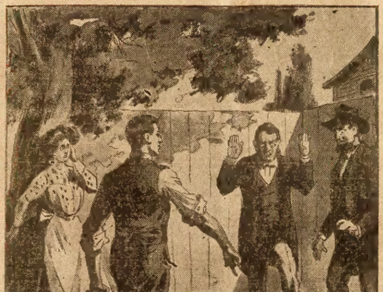
That the woman had been in the bachelor's smoking-room, either before the arm was cut off, or afterwards.

That the disfigured condition of her face and head prevented any correct idea of the deceased's appearance, but that from her garments she was concluded to be a total stranger to Little Brook.

That the cause of her death was unknown.

That her identity was unknown.

That her motive for breaking into the bachelor-home, and going to the smoking-room was unknown.



"Horrible!" murmured Dr. Bradbury.

That the polished condition of the latch of the side gate suggested that it had been cleaned from probable blood-stains, made by the person who had trundled the body to its spot of burial.

From this verdict the reader will observe that Detective Keeneyes had held back several facts from the coroner's jury.

In the first place he had not told, nor had Mayor White hinted, regarding Clarence Bradbury's man-trap.

But, most vital of all, Keeneyes had not revealed, even to Mayor White, his suspicion that the murdered woman was the sister of Doctor Bradbury's wife, and that it was Mrs. Bradbury who had wheeled away her sister's corpse upon the wheelbarrow.

A complete inventory was made of the deceased's garments; then she was properly buried in the cemetery.

It is not to be supposed that while these events were in progress, Keeneyes was a passive witness. At the first possible moment, he called aside the stranger but newly come to town, and held with him a close conversation. He opened it up in the most natural way, by saying:

"Mr. Pump, do you smoke."

"Yes, thank you," said the detective, gratefully awaiting the proffer of a cigar; for he was sure that if the celebrated Keeneyes smoked cigars, he would detect adulteration in anything less than a twenty-five cent brand.

"Very well," Keeneyes rejoined. "In that case, I will say, just go ahead and smoke. It doesn't bother me in the least, though I never indulge, myself."

"Oh!" muttered Mr. Pump. He drew forth his stogy, and felt for a match.

Keeneyes said: "You have come to Little Brook as a detective, hey, Pump?"

"Yes, sir, that's what I'm here for."

"But not to investigate the mystery of the lady's dead arm?"

"To be sure, not," said the other, lighting his stogy.

"What have you come for?" demanded Keeneyes, abruptly.

Mr. Pump inhaled the smoke of his stogy. Then he blew it towards Keeneyes. He remarked dryly, "Rather a direct question!"

"Thank you," said Keeneyes, "I made it as direct as I knew how."

"Fortunately,' remarked the new detective, "I know how to say 'no,' as the story-books have it. I refuse to answer your question. My business is very confidential and——"

"Oh, in that case," said Keeneyes, "you do right to refuse to divulge it. Confidences are the most sacred of human affairs. Unfortunately, it wil occupy a little of my time, and my hands are about full."

"What do you mean?" Pump asked sharply. "My affairs have no claim upon your time."

"Why, I must find out what you are in Little Brook for," retorted Keeneyes, "and of course that will take some time, but not much, I fancy."

"My affairs do not concern you, and I do not propose to be watched by anybody," retorted Mr. Pump, hotly.

"They concern me, and I am going to watch you," replied Keeneyes, calmly. "It is only fair to tell you so in advance."

"In that case, Mr. Keeneyes, I will be obliged to regard you as an enemy, and avoid you, and elude you as such."

"Exactly so. It won't be any use, but mainfestly that is all you can do."

Mr. Pump sneered. "You seem pretty confident of your ability to find out why I came to Little Brook!"

"Why, my dear Mr. Pump, I am quite convinced that I already know why you are here!"

Mr. Pump laughed derisively.

"I was morally certain some detectives would presently be here," Keeneyes, went on. "I saw the logical need for one. It was a reasonable inference that one would come."

"You mean, to investigate the severed arm?"

"Certainly not," said Keeneyes. "I am employed to investigate that case."

"Then let me remark, Mr. Keeneyes, that I, and not you, am employed to investigate my case; and I do not want anybody to meddle in my affairs."

"Come, come, my dear Mr. Pump. You have said we are enemies. Let us love each other."

Keeneyes bowed gravely and walked away.

Pump bit savagely at his stogy, and fumed.

"Keeneyes is always so sure of himself!" he muttered. "But whether he is as smart as he thinks, or as wooden-headed as I think, he is going to give me trouble."

In fact, Pump had not been altogether frank with Keeneyes.

It is true he had come to Little Brook to find out how the severed arm of the dead woman had come into Clarence Bradbury's smoking-room.

And yet his case was associated with that dead arm.

This, indeed, Keeneyes suspected.

Keeneyes was resolved to keep an eye on Pump.

There ensued maneuvering on the part of each which would have been highly entertaining to an understanding observer.

It was Pump's intention to get away from Keeneyes.

Keeneyes was resolved not for a moment to lose sight of him, and in order to accomplish his purpose, he was obliged temporarily to abandon his own mystery case.

Pump worked for some time in the open. That is, he ostensibly made no attempt to elude detection.

Keeneyes also worked in the open that is, he let it be seen that he was plainly upon the watch.

Pump went to dinner at a restaurant.

Keeneyes stood upon the sidewalk till the other came out.

Pump scowled as he passed. Keeneyes grinned.

Pump, now took a saunter about town. Keeneyes lagged behind.

Pump turned a corner, suddenly darted down an alley, doubled upon his track and returned to the restaurant, where he seated himself upon a bench under the show-window

He waited some time. At last Keeneyes came running down the street, and paused at the bench, panting.

"I tell you," said Keeneyes, heartily, "that was a good one! Why, Mr. Pump, you are a daisy! It's worth while following a man that knows how to run away. Do you know, I very seldom have a chance to track a professional? This is exhilerating!"

"See here, Mr. Keeneyes," said Pump, "I don't propose to stand this any longer. I won't be followed, as if you were a dog at my heels."

"Thanks for the simile," murmured Keeneyes.

"I say, as if you were a dog," rejoined Pump. "Now, see here; I will seek protection from the officials, if you don't leave me alone."

"Oh, please don't, that would ruin everything," said Keeneyes, apparently in great earnestness. "I'll be good, my dear Mr. Pump. Good-by."

Keeneyes turned abruptly and marched away.

Pump looked after him uneasily. He was not sure that the detective had really gone.

Presently he rose and sauntered in the direction Keeneyes had taken. The latter was invisible. That, however, did not prove that he was not present. Pump took a walk to the country. When he came back to town it was about three in the afternoon.

Pump circled about the poorer part of the town, and was finally half-persuaded that Keeneyes had been given the slip. He approached a brown, two-room cottage, and after hastily looking up and down the street, knocked.

A young girl, about eighteen, opened the door. She was extremely pretty, poorly dressed, but neat.

"Is your father at home, Miss Milbank?" Pump inquired.

"No, sir; he will not be back for two hours."

"Miss Milbank, I have come to see you on business. To be candid, I am glad your father is away, for I want to speak with you privately. I am Pump, a detective from St. Louis.'

The girl started back. "What do you want?" she faltered.

"You must let me speak to you where we cannot be overheard. This is to your interest. While I am a detective, officially, I want to befriend you as much as possible. You know whose arm was found in Clarence Bradbury's smoking-room. Pray let me enter in, or the people will hear me from the street."

"What do you mean," the girl repeated. But she stood inside that he might enter the cottage.

Pump entered, closing the door behind him. The girl was violently agitated, but she endeavored desperately to control herself. "What do you want me to do?" she asked. "What do you accuse me of? I am innocent of anything wrong."

"I hope so, I hope so! Sit down, Miss Milbank, you are almost overcome."

There came a knock upon the door.

"We are interrupted!" said Pump, hastily. "I will go now. Let your company think that I came only to see your father."

"Don't do anything till you see me again," the girl said in a pleading voice. She opened the door.

It was Keeneyes.

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Churches open later and close earlier than saloons.

One way to acquire new friends quickly is to inherit a million dollars.

Some women would rather be unhappily married than happily unmarried.

What would the result be if we all followed the advice we give to others?

And it is easier to acquire a good reputation than it is to keep the freckles off it later.

You can always make a satisfactory deal with an honest man—unless you are in the dishonest class.

Too many men make strenuous efforts to get a liberal share of something that doesn't belong to them.

That workman who takes a real interest in his work doesn't have to spend much time looking for a job.

Mr. Rockefeller may decide to travel around the earth and make a thorough inspection of his property.

In communing with the ocean Mr. Rockefeller can easily feel that he is associating with one of his own size.

When you encounter a man who tells you that the world is growing worse give him the sorrowful look and pass on.

Japan has opened the door to Manchuria after it had filled all the shelves with goods shoved in through the window.

Although the law holds a man innocent until he has been proved guilty, one's wife is apt to hold him guilty until he has proved his innocence.

A girl seldom makes a mistake in marrying a man who lives in a boarding house. Such a man will appreciate any kind of home cooking.

President Roosevelt may have noted that a prospective jail sentence is much more likely to keep a guilty rebater awake nights than a prospective fine.

Occasionally you hear of a man having more money than he knows what to do with, but no one ever hears of a woman being in that delightful condition.

A descendant of Columbus was at Alfonso's wedding, although the boy king can hardly have forgiven the gentleman's busy ancestor for ever having discovered America.

Probably deep down in his soul, or the place where his soul ought to be if he hasn't one, Senator Burton is wondering why the senate didn't throw him out long ago.

Mr. and Mrs. Longworth have started for Europe and the kings of that part of the world already have called up the hired girl and told her to see that the spare room is rights for an emergency.

THE SAN FRANCISCO SORCERESS;

OR

THE CRACK OF DOOM.

By T. C. HARBAUGH, author of "Robespierre," "Judas Legacy." Etc.

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CHAPTER XVII.

ONYX.

A man like Clidd Selden was is resourceful.

He had used his great wealth in many ways, but he did not forget to make provision for the future.

When he conveyed Miriam Richmond and her father from the palace which the soldiers had dynamited to make a gap over which the fire could not leap in its mad career, he had another asylum.

Half an hour after the escape from the house he was under another roof which he called his own.

It was situated on Nob Hill, as yet out of the range of fire, but destined ere that terrible conflagration ended to feel the effects of the monster calamity.

Within tne walls of this place Miriam and her fatner stood waiting for the next play of the gold-sport.

The minister had disappeared and Selden for the time being, seemed to have given over his attempts to force Miriam to the unwilling bridal.

But she knew that the time was only delayed, that Clidd Selden had not given over his base intentions, and so she waited for the next move even while she planned anew to baffle him.

From the windows of this new prison—it was nothing else—she could look over the terrible tragedy which had not yet ended the destruction of San Francisco.

It was a grand, yet appalling sight.

The on-rush of the fire-fiend, the vast columns of smoke, the constant explosions which sent the work of years toward the sky, the loss of art treasures, homes, money —everything!

For some hours she had not seen Selden.

Her father sat in a large chair gazing half vacantly out of the window

She had watched him until her heart sank with pity to the depths of her bosom.

All at once she started.

The night had fallen so suddenly.

"Why not now?" cried she, springing to his side. "The man-tiger is absent. We will escape!"

He looked up into her face and started. Escape? Why not? But there suddenly fell over him the old fear, the fear of the exposure of his secret. It was that which had crushed him, that which had placed his only child in the power of Lucky Selden. No, it was useless.

The gril tugged at his sleeve.

"Freedom lies just out yonder!" she cried, pointing from the chamber. "Out there is liberty. We will go."

She dropped his arm and went to the door. It was not locked. She opened it and looked into the hallway. It was empty.

"The way is free," she said, coming back to her parent. "Fortune favors us. Now is our time."

Donald Richmond seemed to shake off the lethargy that had taken hold of him. Freedom! Ah, it did lie just beyond the walls of that house.

Miriam almost dragged him across the room. He was breathless, but strangely calm.

Miriam threw wide the door and they stepped into the hall. No one stopped them.

"It is true," murmured Richmond. "The way is clear. Thank God!"

Toward the door they went, but as Miriam put out her hand to open it she was startled by a human voice.

"Which way, Miss?"

She whirled to confront a large, dark-faced man with eyes of evil, a man after Clidd Selden's own base heart.

"So you're the Cerberus of this den?" cried Miriam, as she faced this man. "He has set you to watch us?"

The man only grinned, displaying two rows of yellow teeth, and came forward.

"I'm Onyx," said he.

"Onyx who?"

"Just Onyx."

Miriam looked at him a few seconds in silence and drew closer to her father, whose hand she had not relinquished.

"You're not going out, Miss? It's agin' orders."

"Against whose orders?"

"The boss's."

"Clidd Selden? Well, Master Onyx, we're going out."

The big fellow looked at her amazed. That a girl should defy authority in that house seemed to stupefy him. He laughed at her words and came a little closer.

Setting her white teeth hard, Miriam pushed her father nearer the door and seized a polished redwood stick that stood in one corner. As her hands touched it her desperation increased and she straightened before the human watchdog.

"Drop that stick, Miss," said he. "It's dangerous."

The girl did not reply.

"You're not going out, that's what," he went on. "You're to remain here till Mr. Selden comes back. He's gone out to look for a preacher."

The last words went through Miriam like an arrow. After a minister! She knew what that meant. Perhaps the other one had at the last moment refused to carry out Selden's commands.

But she did not drop the redwood stick. It just fitted her hands, and when she looked into the face of the man before her her courage gave her new life.

"He'll be back soon. Ought to be here now," volunteered the guard. "But I s'pose the fire's stopped him somewhere."

In another moment the stick was above Miriam's head. The man caught the gleam that lit up her eyes.

"I say you can't go," cried he. "I don't like to use force, but if you persist in disobeying Onyx, why——"

He paused suddely, for Miriam had darted at him with resistence pictured in her pallid face.

"Curse you——"

The big fellow threw up his hands, but did not finish his sentence.

The redwood stick wielded by the strong arms of the beauty of 'Frisco dashed down his arms and struck a blow under which he reeled away.

He fell against the wall and Miriam, fearing that he was not yet hors du combat, sprang after him and dealt another blow across his cranium.

He went heavily to the floor under the last stroke. She drew back and glanced at her father.

He was as white as a cloth, by the door and breathless as well. He had witnessed the assault as in a dream, had seen Onyx go down under Miriam's strokes and now he stood watching her and wondering what would be her next move.

"At last!" cried the girl, reaching his side and seizing his wrist. "We have cleared the way."

"But the city burns!"

"We cannot arrest the progress of the fire," was the answer. "We must find safety beyond this house for of a surety it lies there."

Miriam opened the front door and they stepped out upon the broad porch. It was beautifully covered with creepers and flowers blossomed in profusion everywhere.

The girl led her father to the edge of the porch and for a moment they stood there, dazed as it seemed by the terrific sight that burst upon their vision.

"It is the burning of Rome over again," said Richmond.

"And we have just escaped from Nero," replied Miriam. "Come. We must lose no time."

They quitted the porch and descended the little hill beyond. The heat of the flames was already in their faces. It was a withering blast which nothing but the sea could check.

"This way!" cried Miriam, pulling her enfeebled father after her. "We will find shelter somewhere and maybe, Howard."

On they went, the fire roaring not far away and the sky crimson under its terrible glow. Not far away they met a stream of fugitives.

Some stopped to look at them for a moment, while others took no notice at all but pushed on, bewailing the loss of property, relatives and friends. The end of the world seemed to have begun.

"That's old Richmond and his girl," said a voice near them. "We're all on a level, now."

CHAPTER XVIII.

MIRIAM AND THE VEILED MYSTERY.

Yes, all were on a level now. Millionaire and beggar, pride and prejudice, the woman with her jewels and the orphan with her broken doll were flying pell mell from the ruin of the earthquake and the fire.

Miriam and her father pushed on, now swallowed up in the crowd and now separated for a moment from the torrent of distressed humanity. The girl looked not back. Behind her lay the place from which they had just escaped, perhaps by the sacrifice of a life, and before—Ah! she did not know what lay before.

They went on and on until at last, almost exhausted, they sank at one side of the street and watched the constant stream of life that passed them.

Donald Richmond almost immediately fell into a deep slumber. Nature seemed to have exhausted herself.

With his head pillowed in Miriam's lap he slept like a child unawakened by the explosions and the indescribable confusion that reigned on every hand.

A strong wind was blowing from the coast, a breeze that only fed the flames and carried the sparks into new quarters and found for them new material.

Miriam fell to watching the hurrying crowd.

It seemed endless.

At last she nodded, the fair head dropped upon her bosom and she slept beside her father. There came to her no wind dream of Clidd Selden. Instead she saw Tredgold leaping a barrier of flames to her rescue and started from her slumbers.

Who was that person standing before her? What strange woman was there gazing down at her from behind a veil that hid her face? Miriam started up with a little cry. She had heard of but one hidden face in San Francisco. She had heard men talk of Vera, the sorceress. Was she now face to face with this prophetess of evil?

The woman was attired in black, unrelieved by any other color.

Strange to say she seemed to regard Donald Richmond more than the daughter. She watched his face with evident curiosity, stooping a little for a closer view.

"'Tis my father," said Miriam, in reply to the woman's stare. "We are exhausted. We fell by the wayside as it were, having escaped——"

She did not finish the sentence.

"I understand," came from behind the veil. "You need not finish, Miss."

Again the strange woman regarded Richmond who slept on unmindful of what was occurring about him.

"How is his health?" Vera—for it was Vera—inquired.

"Poor dear, he is near the end," sighed Miriam.

"The excitement, no doubt."

"He has been in bad health for years."

"Mentally, girl?"

"Partly so."

"He has his troubles, then?"

"Yes."

"Does anything prey on his mind?"

Miriam started at the question. How did this woman know that something had preyed on her father's mind. Ah, was she not a sorceress and did she not lift the veil of the future as well as know the past in thousands of lives!

"Why do you ask?" said Miriam. "If you are the person I take you to be you should know."

"Whom do you think I am?" queried Vera, falling back a little.

"You are Madam Vera of Washington street."

"There is no Washington street, now."

"Gone with the others, has it? Well, you did live there and you are called Vera the Sorceress."

Vera was silent for a little while and then she sat down beside Miriam.

Her veil almost touched the girl's face and Miriam thought she saw beyond it two stars that glittered where eyes ought to be.

"I am glad to have found you," said Vera, her gaze suddenly reverting to Richmond again. "You have been in deep trouble. You have escaped from the fowler's snare."

"What mean you?"

"You have been in Clidd Selden's power."

"Then you know!" cried Miriam. "Why not if you are what they call you?"

Vera laughed a little under the veil.

"Tell me," said she, "Did he attempt to carry out his plans?"

"Yes, but he failed."

"That old man sold you for the secret, did he not?"

Miriam, with a cry started and laid her hand on her father's arm.

"Don't upbraid him for it," said she, with an indignant look at Vera. "Remember the hold that wretch had on him. There is a secret. Clidd Selden knew it and it was his weapon. My father always zealously guarded his honor."

"Held it above the happiness of his child, eh?"

"Yes, God pity him!"

"You are right. God pity him," said Vera, with rising voice. "The honor of some men is not worth that," and she snapped her fingers almost in Richmond's face.

"You must not," cried Miriam. "Forget not that he is old and feeble."

"Pardon me, girl. I am sometimes carried away by excitement. Do you know

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anything about the secret which Selden held over your father's head?"

"Yes."

"Has he made you his confessor?"

"He confessed to me."

Vera held her hands to her bosom.

"Ah!" she sighed. "If one could but blot out the past with its multitude of sins."

The young girl looked strangely at her and then glanced at her father.

"He did not say——"

Vera paused and did not finish her sentence.

"Let us not discuss this subject," said Miriam. "Since you have been through the fire district you may have seen my friend."

"Your friend, child?"

"Howard Tredgold."

"Your lover, you mean."

A flush mounted to Miriam's temples.

"You need not make me your confessor, Miss Richmond," smiled Vera, underneath the veil. "Tredgold is your lover. I have seen him."

"Then he is alive?"

"Yes, or was when I saw him last."

Miriam's hands came together in attitude of thankfulness while the keen eyes of Vera regarded her.

"Your father is winking now," suddenly exclaimed the sorceress. "I will go."

"No! Stay and talk with him," said Miriam, but Vera sprang up with a perceptible shudder.

"Not now," she said. I will see you again. Remain here. You will be safe where you are. I will see to that."

"Will you find Howard Tredgold?"

"If I can."

By this time Donald Richmond was himself again and his gaze had singled out the dark robed figure before him.

"Who is that woman, child?" he asked, turning to Miriam.

"The mystery of San Francisco," said the daughter. "'Tis Vera, the veiled Sorceress, as they call her."

"And she—witch—has come into our lives?"

"For the time being, perhaps. She has promised to find Howard. I have just been talking to her. She looked at you so closely, papa, that at times I feared——"

"You feared the sorceress?" smiled Richmond.

"I confess that I did."

By this time the figure of Vera was some distance away and she had stopped and was watching the couple whom she had just left.

"If that old man but knew," passed her lips. "If Donald Richmond could lift the veil that hides my face and has hidden it for years, some sunshine might come back into his life. But we shall see, we shall see."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE OLD, OLD CRIME.

But for the quick and perhaps a little nervous aim of Clidd Selden, Howard Tredgold would never have seen the light of another day.

Fortunately he was but stunned by the shot delivered in the park and when he came to he found a surgeon bending over him, who said that the wound was but a slight one. His head was bandaged and in a litle while he was himself again.

When asked who had attempted his life he maintained a strict silence and those who listened, seeing a secret behind his act, did not inquire further.

Selden was already out of sight. Thinking that he had finished the man who was now his hunter, he had betaken himself to another part of the doomed city and Tredgold did not immediately pursue.

"I will find him yet," said he under his breath. "The debt I have to settle with that man will be settled with compound interest. I will not let him escape me. The very heavens call for vengeance and it shall be taken."

THEY LAUGHED

At the Arguments on the Packages.

The husband of an Ohio woman brought home some packages of Grape-Nuts one evening and there was much discussion, but let her tell the story.

"Two years ago I was thin and sickly and suffered so from indigestion, was very nervous, and could not sleep at night, I was not able physically or mentally to perform my duties and was constantly under the care of our physician. I had tried plain living and all the different remedies recommended by friends but got no better.

"One day my husband brought home two yellow boxes and said, 'The grocer wants us to try this food and report how we like it, he thinks it will help you.' I read all it said on the boxes about Grape-Nuts and I remember how I laughed at it, for I thought it foolish to think food could help me. But the next meal we all ate some with cream. We liked and enjoyed the deliciously crisp and new flavor so we kept on using Grape-Nuts, not because we thought it would cure me but because we liked it.

"At that time we had no idea what the results would be but now I am anxious to have the world know that today I am a well and strong woman physically and mentally. I gained over 30 pounds, do not suffer from any of the old ails and I know that it is to Grape-Nuts alone that I owe my restored health. They call me 'Grape-Nuts' here in the home and all of my friends have asked me the cause of it all. I have persuaded several of them to use Grape-Nuts and every one of them who has done so has been benefited and I wish it were in my power to induce everyone who is sick to give this wonderful food a trial. We still have Grape-Nuts three times a day and never tire of it.' Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Ten days on this nourishing and completely digestible food will show anyone who is run down from improper feeding a great change, sometimes worth more than a gold mine becaue it may mean the joy and spring of perfect health in place of the old ails. Trial proves. "There's a reason.'

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Believing that Miriam and her father were still in Selden's toils, he rested awhile after his adventure and pushed away once more.

The hours passed.

All at once Tredgold stopped, for he caught sight of a tableau that startled him not a little.

He saw Miriam and her father in the street standing hand in hand and dazed by what was passing around them.

The couple had not seen him as yet and he stood off a little pace to make sure that his eyes had not deceived him.

No, he could not be mistaken.

At last he drew nearer and noted the haggard expression on Richmond's face and the earnest solicitude with which Miraim regarded him.

Suddenly the young girl turned and with a start recognized her friend.

"Howard!" she exclaimed. "At last!"

In an instant she was bounding toward him and they met in the lurid light of a city's doom.

Donald Richmond stared vacantly at the couple, and when Miriam led her lover forward he put out his hand in a listless manner.

"Safe!" said Miriam, looking up into Tredgold's face. "But this bloody bandage?"

"'Tis not the only one worn in the city," said he, evasively. "It is my souvenir of this dreadful time."

"But how came you by it?"

He put her off again, and fell to talking of other things for he cared not to revert to the consummate vilian who had been the bane of their lives.

Tredgold guided the two fugitives from the spot where he had found them and at last found a shelter where, for the time being, they were safe.

But the merciless fire found them even there.

Unchecked as yet in its course, it had swept on and on, threatening the entire city with destruction.

The heavens looked pityingly upon the doomed city and the winds for a moment ceased to fan the flames. But again they rose, sweeping in from the sea and sent the red-tongued demons into new localities.

"It is no use," said Tredgold, as he and Miriam watched the progress of the fire. "We are in its course. This place will soon be untenable and we will have to take to the parks again."

And so they did.

Back to Golden Gate Park they went with thousands trooping at their heels, thousands who were as poor as the poorest beggar that roamed the streets.

The ruin was awful. It caused many a heart to sink in utter despair and strong men who had never before, were praying in the parks in sight of their burned homes.

By degrees, Tredgold had told Miriam of his hunt for Clidd Selden.

She had listened, white faced, nor put in a word for the villian when her lover said that he would hunt him down and take summary vengeance for his inhumanity.

"How he escaped from the ruins of Lin Tung's resort is more than I can conjecture," said Howard. "I believe though, that Lin Tung himself had a hand in his rescue. I flung the wretch against the wall of a building and he fell back—dead, I hope—upon the Queen of the Roses. Chinatown, thank God, is no more and the yellow sin of 'Frisco is wiped out."

Just then Donald Richmond opened his eyes and looked searchingly at Tredgold.

"Howard," said he, and the young mine owner went over to him, "I want to talk with you."

Miriam, who caught her father's words drew off a pace and fell to watching the couple under the trees.

"Do you know?" asked Richmond.

"Do I know what?"

"The—my secret?"

"I know there is a secret else you would never——"

Tredgold paused.

"Why don't you go on?" said Richmond, with a wan smile. "You meant to say that if there were no dark secret I would never have sold yon child to Lucky Selden?"

"Yes," admitted Tredgold, "that is what I would have said."

"There is a secret," and the old man lowered his voice. "It is the sin of my life. It was years ago and in the camp near the great river."

"You need not make me your confessor," put in Tredgold. "I do not care to know the secret. Keep it."

"But I cannot, after what has happened. I was a guardian of what I loved to call my honor. I loved it more, I fear, than I loved Miriam. I held it above everything. When that man come to me with the knowledge of my secret——"

"He took advantage of you. I see."

"He bided his time. He waited till Miriam had developed into matchless womanhood. He waited, like the leper he is, gloating over his future triumph and knowing how week I was. He came to me with a proposition that should have caused me to send a bullet through his brain."

"I'll do that!" thought Tredgold.

"He took me under the amor. He found my weakest point and drove his spear home."

"I know it, sir, but never mind that. The night is past and the day has come."

"Not for me. That night is dark still. It is that secret. I can see that woman hanging over the cliffs. I can see her white imploring face——"

"Why did you do it?"

"Man," cried Richmond, "you don't know the human heart. You are yet young. That woman came to ensnare me. She was beautiful, but——"

"May she not have been sent by Selden? You knew him then?"

The old man started.

"My God! I never thought of that.'

"It may have been his plot then. You are sure she died that time?"

"She could not hold on long to the edge of those cliffs. I hurled her from me. I saw her face for the last time, heard her despairing cry and turned away."

"And how did Selden discover it?"

"Heaven knows, but that he did discover it is terribly true. He has played his hand."

"He has played it out," said Tredgold, through clenched teeth. "The days of one villain are numbered."

"As well as the days of this city," groaned Richmond.

The old man looked away for a moment and then turned again to the young mine owner.

"She is yours, boy," said he, stealing a glance toward Miriam.

"But you have given her to him."

"So I have, but I repudiate the bargain."

"Remember your honor," said Tredgold, with a sarcastic smile.

"I cast it to the winds! I hurl it from me. Let the man do his worst."

Just then, Miriam, with a cry and a leap reached the spot where the couple stood.

"Look!" cried she, pointing away. "Look! He is here again, Clidd Selden!"

CHAPTER XX.

THE LIFTING OF A VEIL, LOVE.

Sure enough, not far away stood Clidd Selden and his look told Miriam and Tredgold that he had again found his quarry.

The hand of the mine owner went instinctively to his weapon, but Miriam seized his wrist.

"The vengeance belongs to heaven," said she, in low tones. "It will excite father and perhaps end his life."

Selden came forward and his eyes glistened when he looked into Miriam's face in the firelight.

Donald Richmond drew back, gave him a scrutinizing glance and dropped his head.

"I am glad to have found you again," said he, to the girl. "The whole city seems doomed and no one is permitted to get away. There is a cordon of soldiers everywhere. The city is under martial law. Before long we will all be on the charity of the Government."

"Then rich and poor will be on an equality," answered Tredgold. "The millionaire will have the same fare as the beggar."

Selden gave the young man a look that spoke volumes, but did not seem to take notice of his remark.

"I can offer you an asylum," he said, to Miriam. "I know a place where both of you can rest and where you will be safe."

"They need not go," put in Tredgold, as he faced the villain. "I doubt not they have had enough of your generosity!"

Selden shot Tredgold a look of lowering blackness.

"I was addressing Miss Richmond," said he.

"And I address Clidd Selden, the gold-sport of 'Frisco. I am speaking to the lover of the Queen of the Roses, the yellow witch who has perished with your kisses on her lips."

An instant later, Selden stepped back and his hand flew toward his weapon.

Mirian, with a cry, flung herself between the two men.

"No!" cried she. "This is not the time for hatreds and vengeance. The city is a thing of the past. Another time old scores may be settled, but not now."

"Let the truth come forth now," said a deep-toned voice near by and the startled group saw before them the dark robed figure of Vera the Sorceress.

She stood in statuesque attitude, a pair of eyes behind her veil regarding Richmond more than the others.

The old man shivered, but did not speak.

"You here?" said Selden. "What brings you to this spot, woman? I thought you had fled the city?"

"Why should I go—to escape you, Clidd Selden?" was the response. "You have a memory?"

"A good one. I have looked into your accursed mirror."

"Aye, and you would have gazed upon my face."

A laugh came through the somber veil.

"Who is that creature?" suddenly broke in the voice of Donald Richmond.

"She is Vera the Sorceress, papa," answered Miriam, as she laid her hand tenderly upon her parent's arm.

"Oh! the seeress of Washington Street!" was the reply as the form of Richmond bent forward. "I have heard of the—witch."

"Aye, and have seen her. You have a good memory Donald Richmond?"

"His memory is not good any more," Miriam answered for her father. "He is failing in health. That man yonder——"

She looked at Lucky Selden and paused abruptly.

"Why don't you go on, girl?" cried the man, his lip curling proudly. "You were going to accuse me of something."

"Why should I not?" and Miriam took courage as she glanced again at Vera. "But for you I would not have passed through the terrible hours that have come to me. My father would not have been called on to save his honor by a sacrifice that tore his inmost soul."

"That's good, devilish good," laughed the gold sport. "I dare say you have been well coached," and his eye wandered to Tredgold whose hands opened and shut with a desire to reach out and seize the villain.

"Let me speak," it was the voice of Vera. "The time has come for me to open the book of the past."

"And then turn a page in the tome of the future," sarcastically grinned Lucky Selden.

Vera did not heed the words.

"Years ago, yon man not so aged then, was the head of a great gold camp. He was prosperous. He was on the high road to untold wealth."

"Yes, yes," broke in the voice of Richmond

"Wait till I am through," commanded the sorceress. "Time enough for confirmation then. One day there came into Camp Fortune, a woman who seemed to have a purpose. She was sent thither by a man with a motive. She came thither to ensnare the owner of the gold camp. She came under oath for her master had bound her with one. She was young and unscrupulous then. She did not think it very wrong to play the cards that had been put into her hands, stacked cards all.

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"She was getting on very well with her game when she made a blunder and in an evil hour unmasked herself under the influence of wine. The owner of the camp walked with her one night to the cliffs over Death River. How it poured savagely over the stones a thousand feet below, rushing on like a demon of doom! The two quarreled on the very edge of the beetling cliffs. The woman laughed in the man's face. She taunted him in a manner that no man can stand. She laughed at his assertion that he loved his dead wife. And to think that she had had him in the snare.

"She went too far with her game, did that woman. She played the wrong card. Suddenly she was in the hands of the man. He bore her to the fringe of the cliffs and in a mad moment threw her from him. There was a wild cry which the roar of the rapids drowned and the man turned away. The woman——"

"Was dashed to death! God pity me!" broke in Donald Richmond, as he staggered back and would have fallen had he not been caught by Tredgold.

"No, not to death, but she was saved for mystery," cried the voice of the sorceress. "The world thought Vesta Delome dead, but let the present solve the enigma. Look! Behold the face San Francisco has never seen."

One of the hands of the speaker was lifted to her face and the next moment the veil was torn aside.

There was a cry from Clidd Selden, a wild ejaculation from Richmod and Tredgold and Miriam stood white faced and gazed.

"I am Vesta Delome! I did not die that night. Some bushes caught my falling body and I managed after terrible efforts to save my own life. Look at me, Clidd Selden. I am the card you played for Donald Richmond's undoing. Behold me, Richmond. I am the unhappy creature you hurled from the cliffs that night. Men call me Vera the Sorceress. I am the Occult Queen, the princess of the black art. But the time has come for the lifting of the veil. you are guilty of no murder, Donald Richmond. Clidd Selden has no hold on you. I was his dupe, his slave and he looks upon my face for the first time since he sent me to Camp Fortune to play his wicked hand."

"Witch," hissed Selden as he started back. "Would to God the bushes had not caught you that night."

"Hear him," laughed Vera. "Does he not confirm his part in the wild drama of the past? Some day the vengeance of God will overtake the vile wretch whom the earthquake has spared."

"I will carry out the vengeance of heaven!" exclaimed Tredgold, as he started forward.

But the hand of Vera gripped his wrist.

"No," said she, looking him in the face till he quailed before her flashing eyes. "His hour is near at hand. Let him go to the doom the gods have prepared for him. As for you," she stepped forward and held out her hands to Donald Richmond. "I forgive you that wild act on the cliffs. I went too far in my deep game plotted by the wretch yonder. May the years bring you peace and may heaven overlook the sins of Vesta Delome who passes from your life forever. For she is no more the dupe of Clidd Selden and no longer Vera, the Sorceress!"

When the astonished trio looked at Clidd Selden he had vanished and Tredgold would have followed, but for the restraining hand of Vera.

"Doom is on his track. Let him go," said she.

Never was there a truer prophecy.

An hour later, a man hurrying through the ruins of a building was halted by a soldier. He hurled back a curse and the answer was a shot.

There was a cry and a tumble and the victim fell on his face, quivering in the agonies of death. They pulled him into the fitful light of the burning city and some one spoke his name.

"It is Lucky Selden," said this person. "And shot to death at that!"

After the burning, after the wild conflagration that filled a world with pity a young couple went slowly up one of the hills that overlooked the scene of devastation.

It was in the early morning and the sun was rising to shame upon the homeless thousands in the parks and upon the still smoking ruins of mart and place.

The young man drew his companion closer to him and for a silent minute they gazed upon the scene below.

"It will be a grander city," said he. "It will be a concrete paradise, the admiration of the world and as lasting as——"

"Our love, Howard," was the reply, and Tredgold stooped and kissed the beautiful face upturned to him, and they looked again and saw in a vision as it were the newer San Francisco clothed in the raiment of a queen.

The end.

A genuine cashmere shawl requi goats' fleece and three men's months.

In the Wrong Office.

Pedler—My dear sir, do you know how much time you lose dipping a pen into the ink? Ten dips a minute means six hundred dips an hour or six thousand dips in ten hours, and each dip consumes——

Business Man—Yes, I know; I have figured it all out.

Pedler—And yet I find you still writing in the old way.

Business Man—Yes, I am using the fountain pen you sold me about six months ago—using it in the old way because it won't write any other way.

Pedler—Beg pardon; I'm in the wrong office. Good day.

Feminine Financiering.

Husband—Did you get that ten dollar check your uncle sent you cashed yet?

Wife—No, I haven't been out.

Husband—Well, I am sending an order to a cigar-dealer for two boxes of five-dollar cigars. I don't want to send money in an envelope. You take this ten dollars, and give me your check.

Wife—Certainly.

Husband—a day later—More money! Why, my dear, what did you do with the ten dollars your uncle sent you?

Wife—in a huff—You took it for cigars.

A Hint for Lovers.

"A girl," said Miss Prim, "should always teach a man his distance."

"Yes," replied Miss Key, "but the right sort of a man would know his distance. I have no patience with the fellow who stands off about three feet and then leans 'way over to kiss you, as if you were a hot potato."

Two Escapes.

Elderly Man—greeting former acquaintance—I remember your face perfectly, miss, but your name has escaped me.

The Young Woman—I don't wonder. It escaped me three years ago, I am married now.

Debtor and Creditor.

Skrawler—I've seen Snippem, the tailor, going up to your studio every day for a week. Is he sitting for you?

Dauber—No, he's laying for me.

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Had to Have It.

Citiman—I see you've got an automobile. I thought you swore you'd never buy one?

Sububs—I know I did at one time, but our new cook insisted that we must get one, because her church is so far away from our house.

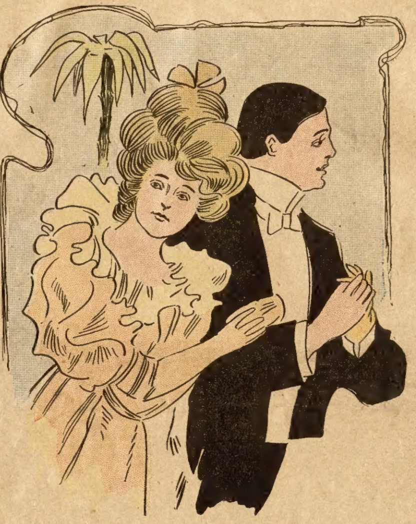
No Information.

"Have you seen Professor Gabbleton, the scientist, lately?"

"Yes. I listened to him for more than an hour at the club last night."

"Indeed! What was he talking about?"

"He didn't say."



She—These very large, expensive weddings seem to be going out of fashion.

He—Yes, it has been estimated that the presents received seldom represent more than 3 per cent on the investment.

Non-Intoxicant.

Doctor Wiley, of the Department of Agriculture, says that bottled whiskey is the only safe kind. The records show that whiskey left in bottles has never injured any one seriously.

Will it be Ever Thus.

First Angel—What's the matter with the spirit in the seventh heaven?

Second Angel—He complains that the spirit in the sixth heaven won't stop practising his harp.

The Professional Jokers.

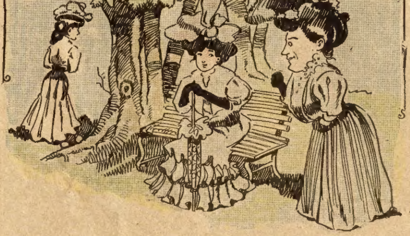
"Do you joke writers ever make jokes at your own expense?"

"For the first few years all our jokes are made that way. After that, if we're lucky, we get paid for 'em."

An Avaricious Lawyer.

How much money will you get for defending that client? asked a friend.

"Don't know," replied the lawyer. "Depends on how much he's got. We'll get all he has."



Mrs. Huh—What do you think of the young wife who is going to fill her pillows with the love letters she received from her husband before their marriage?

Miss Joshleigh—Excellent idea. Nothing could be softer.

Latest Style.

Stubb—I didn't know that women carried degrees. Here is Mrs. Newport with D. behind her name. What does that stand for?

Penn—Divorcee.

Where They Are.

Social Philosopher—Fifty years ago our statesmen and orators loomed up among the first in the world. Where are they now?

Able Editor—In newspaper offices.

Preserred Deception.

"I think you are wrong to resent my words," says the kind friend who has said a few words to the man for his own good. "You may be angry with me now, but in time you will recognize me as a blessing in disguise."

"Well," sighed the man, "I wish you'd keep your disguise on. If it comes to that, a masquerade ball is more fun than a court room."

An Inquisitive Boy.

Robbie's father had a friend call. After they had chatted a few minutes, the only cigar on the table was offered to the guest, so Robbie went up stairs for a fresh box. As the boy reached the top stair, his father was startled to hear:

"Which kind, papa? Do you want those you smoke yourself, or the kind you give away?"

Business Enterprise.

"How is everything going?" asked the manager of the department store of the superintendent of his restaurant.

"Good business in everything except the hashes and stews," answered the superintendent. "I can't understand why we don't have more demand for them."

"Advertise 'em," advises the manager. "Advertise a great remnant sale."

Had Some Effect.

Housekeeper—So you are located at Dairiville? That's where our milkman comes from.

Rural Pastor—Yes, he is a regular attendant at our church, and always appears deeply impressed during the services.

Housekeeper—Yes, I've noticed that his milk is always richer on Mondays than on other days.

Legal Advice.

Mrs. De Temper—I am not happy with my husband. Shall I drive him away?

Lawyer—His life is insured in your favor, isn't it?

"Yes, I made him do that before we were married."

"Well, don't drive him off. He'll die quicker where he is."

Appropriate.

"What is the name of that cigar?" asked the victim, after taking a few puffs.

"That," replied the dealer, "is known as the 'Volcano.'"

"Guess it's well named," rejoined the victim, as he started for the door. Before long all the survivors will be bragging about their narrow escape."

Inharmonious Juxtaposition.

The advertising manager was in a towering rage.

"What's the trouble?" they asked.

"Why, they went and placed our primadonna's testimonial for a cold cure on the same page with the announcement that she had a sore throat, and couldn't sing."

Credentials Sufficient.

New Yorker—Do the Upstarts of Philadelphia belong to the best society there?

Philadelphia Dame—The best society! Bless your innocent heart, of course they do! Why, many and many a moonlight night I've seen their cats and Biddle's cats howling on the same fence.

Where They Met.

Angry Wife—after a quarrel—Seems to me we've been married about a hundred years. I can't even remember when or where we first met.

Husband—emphatically—I can. It was at a dinner-party, and there were thirteen at the table.

His Present.

Sweet Girl—Mother, George told me solemnly that that pretty hairpin-holder he gave me cost five dollars; yet today I saw exactly the same kind on sale for ten cents.

Mother—You know, my dear, George is very religious. Most likely he bought that at a church fair.

Newspaper Titles.

Little Boy—Pop, what's the difference between an editor-in-chief and a managing editor?

Pop—an old reporter—The editor-in-chief is the man who attends banquets and gets all the glory; the managing editor is the man who does the work.

Tit for Tat.

Mr. Jinks—Who has been fooling with this gun?

Mrs. Jinks—The new girl got hold of it this morning, and discharged it.

"My gracious! What did you do?"

"I discharged her."

An Anomaly.

Agitator—Don't you know, sir, that in this country the rich are growing richer and the poor poorer?

Patrick—Then it's rich Oi must be, fur Oi'm a moighty sight better off than Oi waz when Oi landed.

J°LLITY

Husbands.

The woman who said that she knew her husband didn't drink because he drank so much water in the morning isn't in it with the woman who says that the reason her husband doesn't go to church is because he is already as good as he can be.

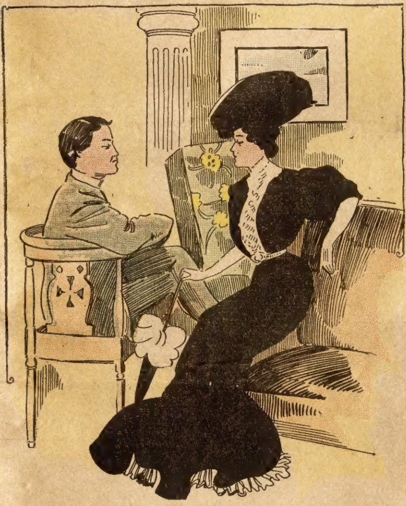
His Snarl.

"Now these chaps that borry money," began the Sage of Plunkville.

"Well?"

"If ye don't expect it back they think ye're a sucker, an' if ye do expect it back they call ye a shylock."

POSITION FILLED.



Willie Gusher—Just let me press one kiss on those coral lips?
Sweet Singer—Sir, I already have a press agent.

Fashion's Changes.

Mr. De Style—Why, my dear, I'm glad to see you so composed. When I left this morning you were weeping, and wailing, and tearing your hair because Fido was sick.

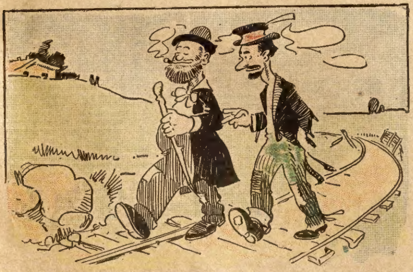
Mrs. De Style—Well, you see, just after you left, Mrs. Tiptop came in and told me that dogs of Fido's breed were going out of fashion. So I dried my tears and kicked him out.

Foolish Women.

Mr. Clubman—entering the dining room—And so you couldn't be down town three hours without stopping to get a lunch? Cost thirty or forty cents, I'll be bound. It does beat all how women throw away money. By the way, you don't call this supper, do you?

Mrs. C.—I suppose it is the best the new girl could get up on such short notice.

"Huh! Catch me sitting down to that table. I'm going around to the club."



Talker—Another couple married on the tr.....
Walker—Aw! I'm getting tired of hearing about railroad ties.

Located.

"Where does it hurt, dear?" said the mother, picking him up from the floor where he had fallen.

"It hurts me in the thigh of my arm!" blubbered the four-year-old.

All Needed.

"They say there is a new word added to the language every day in the year."

"Well, that's right and proper. It just about keeps up with the birth rate in Boston."

A Joke on the Speaker.

Somebody played a joke on Speaker Cannon the other day. When the Speaker sat down at his desk he found a slip of paper asking him to call up number so-and-so on the phone. He did as requested, saying, "Do you want me?"

"I don't know," came back the answer.

"Well, I haven't time to be fooling around here."

"Do you want me?" insisted the Speaker. "Who are you, anyway?"

"This is the government hospital for the insane," was the reply; "if you think you ought to be here, why, come along."

Western Populations.

Stranger—in Western City—I understand you claim one hundred thousand population for this town?

Directory Man—Yes, sir. We have in the new directory, just being finished, twenty thousand names. That multiplied by five, the average size of a family, makes one hundred thousand. See?

Messenger Boy—Please, sir, Mr. Hardtype wants to know how many copies of that directory you want printed?

Directory Man—after some figuring—Um! I guess fifteen will be enough.

The New Version.

New York Editor—See here! don't you know executions by electricity are the law now?

New Man—Certainly.

"Then, sir, what do you mean by using this old-time, chestnutty, moldy quotation, 'Give a rogue rope enough, and he will hang himself.' What do you mean, sir? We are not living in the middle ages."

"What substitute would you suggest?"

"Say, 'Let a rogue go on shocking society, and he will get shocked himself.'"

Too Big a Job.

Foreign Count—You are a society man, and you are poor. I will pay you a large sum if you will introduce me to a rich and beautiful American girl, and I succeed in marrying her.

Society Man—meditatively—Um—I can introduce you to plenty of rich girls and plenty of beautiful girls; but—but to find you a girl who is both rich and beautiful—I think, sir, you had better apply to Pinkerton's Detective Agency.

Managing a Wife.

Jinks—You don't look well, Winks.

Winks—No; that new cook of ours is giving me dyspepsia.

"Send her away."

"She's neat about the house and very respectful, and my wife won't part with her."

"Well, Winks, you'll be sick if she isn't got rid of. Make love to her."

"Cracky! Never thought of that."

Nearly Correct.

"I want to complain about the way you printed the notice of my daughter's wedding," said the fussy old man. "Now, the bride's name was Gratia, and——"

"How did we have it?" interrupted the editor.

"You had it 'Gratis,' sir!"

"Well, that's not so bad. You gave her away, didn't you?"

A Touching Lament.

Addressing a political gathering the other day a speaker gave his hearers a touch of the pathetic. "I miss," he said brushing away a not unmanly tear, "I miss many of the old faces I used to shake hands with."

AGENTS WANTED
START IN BUSINESS FOR YOURSELF
One that has no dull seasons—brings results the year round. Being manufacturers, we enable you to SELL DIRECT FROM THE FACTORY. Many of our agents are making from $5 to $10 a day. We give you exclusive territory and furnish you with samples FREE. Our line includes PATENTED ENAMELED COOKING UTENSILS and HOUSEHOLD GOODS. Write today, tomorrow your district may be gone. Address
20th Century Combination Food Cooker, Steamer and Colander 75c
FENN MANUFACTURING CO., Dept A, JOHNSTOWN, PA.

HOW WOMEN MAY EARN money at home honestly, 10 cts.
E. A. BAUER & CO., 208 N. Jefferson Avenue, ST. LOUIS, MO.

$5 TO $10 per day easily earned selling our Pearl Novelties. New designs, fast sellers; samples and full particulars 25c. Write today. Becker & Becker, Muscatine, Iowa

$25 A WEEK and traveling expenses paid men to place our goods with dealers. Experience unnecessary. A. DEFIANCE COMPANY, Parsons, Kan.

AGENTS, CREDIT, Perfumes, Flavors, etc. Big profits. Express Paid. Terms Free. HERBENE AGENCY CO., Box 282, Sta'n L, New York

WE HAVE OPENING now in every State for one or two SALESMEN. Experience unnecessary if hustler. Permanent position. Good pay. Promotion. Address MOROTOCK TOBACCO WORKS, Box E 13, DANVILLE, VA.

FISH BITE
INSTANTLY
All seasons, if you use INDIAN FISH BAIT. Best fish bait ever invented; nothing like it on the market. A trial box free. Agents wanted
W. C. ANDREWS, Box T1268, Muskogee, Ind. Ter.

SHOSHONE (WYOMING) RESERVATION OPENING
Homeseekers, investors, soldiers and sailors (who may register by agent), school teachers and professional people, last opportunity to avail yourself of free farm or town lot in the growing West. Full information. Pioneer Investment Co., P.O. Box 102, Denver, Colo. Agents Wanted

AGENTS WANTED
We want Agents to sell Our Made-To-Order Suits and Pants. Suits from $10.00 up. Pants, $3.00 up. We will give liberal commission to the right men. If you are interested, write at once for sample outfit, particulars and territory.
Warrington Woolen & Worsted Mills, Dept. "M," Chicago, Ill.

MEN WANTED Reliable Men in every locality throughout United States and Canada to advertise our goods, tacking up show-cards on trees, fences, bridges and all conspicuous places; distributing small advertising matter. Commission or salary $960 a year, or $80 a month and expenses $3.00 a day. Steady employment to good reliable men. We lay out your work for you. No experience needed. Write for full particulars. SALUS MEDICINAL CO., London, Ontario, Canada

$3.60
A $50 Watch for $3.60
Chain and Charm FREE.
GUARANTEED FOR 30 YEARS
This is a Genuine Gold-Filled Engraved Watch in appearance, double hunting-case, stem-wind and stem set, and fitted with a high-grade ruby jeweled movement. Send us this ad. and we will send the WATCH, WATCH CHAIN AND CHARM C.O.D. $3.60 and express charges. Make careful examination then pay express agt. $3.60 and express charges and it's yours. Write if you desire Ladies' or Gents' size.
GUARANTEE WATCH CO., Dept. 672, Chicago

WANTED AGENTS
Local and traveling, to sell our well known Red Tag Nursery Stock. Steady employment. Good pay. Cash every week. Complete outfit free. NO PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE NECESSARY. Established over 50 years. 600 acres. 15 green houses. Address
PHŒNIX NURSERY COMPANY
248 Unity Building, Bloomington, Ill.

PERSONAL to AGENTS
SAMPLE ONLY 15C.
ALUMINUM TEA AND COFFEE STRAINER
is made of one solid piece of aluminum. Has no joints to catch dirt and retain grease. No Kitchen Complete Without One. Light as a feather, beautiful as silver. Won't rust or wear out. Sample only 15 cts.
Agents wanted. W. O. WATKINS & CO., Box 1505. Pittsburgh, Pa.

When answering advertisements you will favor the advertiser and the publishers by mentioning The Chicago Ledger.

AGENTS WANTED—$64,000,000 ANNUAL PROFIT to farmers and dealers by using Hager's Guaranteed Egg Preservative, and holding eggs for high winter prices. Keeps eggs fresh and absolutely perfect 3 months. Only method patented; big demand; exclusive territory; no competition. Credit given. Free samples. Absolute satisfaction or money refunded. National Bank references. Hager's Egg Preservative Co., Incorporated, 4146 Olive St., St. Louis, Mo.

BIG MAIL FREE!
POST OFFICE
Would you like to get a lot of letters, circulars and packages? You probably know that manufacturers, supply houses, wholesalers and publishers buy names and addresses for the purpose of sending samples, advertising matter, papers and circulars to. Good names and addresses are hard to get and are quite expensive. We publish an Agents' Directory List containing names and addresses carefully arranged in alphabetical order. We send these Directory Lists to concerns we know are anxious for good names to send advertising matter to. Write your name very plainly so the printer will not make a mistake; be sure to give your street number and town also plainly written so that any mail addressed to you will reach you without fail. We have been publishing the Agents' Directory List for several years and refer to the editor of this paper who will tell you we are reliable. All we ask is that you send 10 cents in silver and we will enter your name in our Agents' Directory List as above stated. Write today. Address
AGENTS' DIRECTORY LIST,
INDIANA, INDIANA COUNTY

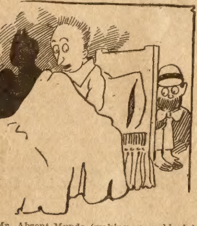
Too Much.

Friend—What? Your husband sick?

Mrs. Peck—Yes, he had a shock this morning.

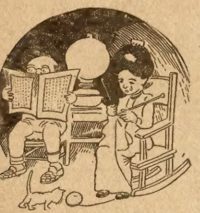
Friend—A shock?

Mrs. Peck—Yes; he and I had a quarrel and mamma sided with him.



Mr. Absent-Mynde (waking up suddenly)—Anyone here?

A-M—I could have sworn I heard someone (turns over and goes to sleep again).



Mrs. Jones—Do you remember our courtship, John? How you breathed words of love and——

Mr. Jones—Yes; I wish now I had followed the medical advice to keep one's mouth shut while breathing.

Always Pleasant.

Vera—I don't fancy you care much about the smell of powder, Colonel.

The old boy—Well, I bar some; but I don't ours particularly.

WILLIE AND THE BABY.

Willie tied the baby's ear
Firmly to the chandelier:
Baby chuckled, full of glee—
'Twas his ear of corn, you see.

Willie pulled him by the tongue:
Round and round the room they swung;
Baby seemed to like it, though—
'Twas his wagon tongue, you know.

Willie having done these two,
Looked to find what else to do;
Cut his head up half an hour—
'Twas his head of cauliflower.

Willie pounded baby's head,
And the infant, smiling, said:
"Oogle joogle, upmty tum"—
'Twas the head of baby's drum.

Willie with his papa's hatchet,
Gave the baby's face a knock:
Baby crowed with joy, for 'taws the
Face of baby's nursery clock.

Willie's little appetite
Longed for something nice and light:
Ate his leg, the little glutton—
'Twas his little leg of mutton.

Willie then, for a surprise,
Dug out both of baby's eyes:
Baby laughed, gave Will a hug—
'Twas his 'tater's eyes he dug.

Willie found a fat cigar,
It was strong and black as tar;
Baby ate it, did not choke—
For it was a candy smoke.

With his little sword and sheath
Willie knocked out baby's teeth:
Baby suffered not a bit—
'Twas his comb that Willie hit.

LADY BIANCA'S CHOICE.

"News, good sirs," said Gaspardo Bellini, entering his school one morning.

"Is it good news, my worthy master?" inquired a handsome young man, who was lazily retouching a picture.

"Yes," returned the old man; "good news for the painters of Bologna."

"Let us hear it at once, master," said half a dozen voices.

"Well, the Lady Bianca has made up her mind to marry at last, and——"

"And has ordered a hundred pictures of her native town," put in a young student, interrupting Bellini.

"Not so fast, not so fast, my worthy signor. Lady Bianca, as I just now said, has made up her mind to marry; and she has promised——"

"A thousand ducats for the best painting of the Madonna!" exclaimed another student, throwing up his velvet cap.

"Give me my brushes, you lazy dog, Stephano, and I'll to work at once," said a third, addressing a thin, poorly dressed youth, who was servant-of-all-work in Gaspardo Bellini's studio.

"Now, now, good sires," said Bellini, "if ye do not give me a fair hearing, I will let ye go to the market-place to hear the news."

"Silence, my worthy gentlemen all," said a roguish-looking young man, mounting a stool, and flourishing a brush. "Silence in the school, while our worthy and much beloved master, Gaspardo Bellini, doth make known to us this wonderful piece of news. Stephano, you Jew," he added, "if a mouse do but squeak, thine unlucky head shall be food for the dogs of Bologna."

Bellini recommenced:

"The Lady Bianca hath at last made up her mind to marry, and hath promised——"

He paused, as if expecting a fresh interruption; but there was none, and he went on slowly:

"Hath promised her hand in marriage to the student of Bologna who shall paint the two best pictures from subjects of his own choosing."

There was a death-like stillness in the studio when Bellini finished speaking.

Stephano, with his large, dark eyes ablaze, crouched in a corner.

"Alberto," whispered Giuseppe to his friend, "your fortune is made, and Bianca is won."

"Our lady grant so," said the young man, pressing Giuseppe's hand. "My noble Bianca hath run a great risk for the sake of her poor Alberto."

"Think you the young duke will enter the lists with us?"

"I fear so," returned Alberto. "He is the only one in Bologna I dread; for report says that the masters at Venice and Rome were highly pleased with his work."

Before the sun went down that day, each student in the school of Gaspardo Bellini had chosen his two subjects, and made some preparations for his work.

Giuseppe's subjects were "St. Cecelia" and a "Street Scene in Bologna" Alberto's were the "Lady Bianca at Vespers" and "St. Michael, the Archangel."

Two years was the given time, and the Lady Bianca, during that period, secluded herself in a convent.

Stephano waited on his young masters as faithfully as ever; but they now treated him a little more kindly, for there were two crimson spots in the youth's cheek and a bright light in his eye, which warned the giddy students that Stephano's place would soon have to be filled by another.

"If I gain the Lady Bianca's hand, Stephano, I will have a requiem chanted for you in the cathedral, and masses celebrated for the repose of your soul."

Stephano smiled sadly.

"And what will you do for me, Alberto?"

"I will bring the Lady Bianca to your grave, and tell her that the gentle Stephano, whom I loved as a brother, is quietly resting there. I will show her the picture I have drawn of you, and teach her to love your memory."

Tears gathered in Stephano's eyes, and a deeper flush dyed his cheeks.

The day on which the Lady Bianca was to redeem her promise dawned bright and lovely.

All Bologna was astir early, for that day the great lady was to give her hand in marriage to the student who had succeeded in painting the two best pictures.

Alberto walked toward the cathedral leaning on Giuseppe's arm.

"Courage, courage, Alberto, the prize is yours!" said his friend.

Alberto shook his head mournfully.

"Saints preserve us!" exclaimed Giuseppe, "there is little Stephano dressed in girl's clothes."

"No, no, it is Rosina!" ejaculated Alberto, rushing forward in the crowd.

He returned in a few seconds looking disappointed.

"Poor Rosina! I could not find her," he said.

On the gates of the cathedral a paper was pasted, which contained the names of the successful paintings.

The two friends pushed their way to the gates.

"I am blind, Giuseppe. I cannot see," said Alberto. "Tell me their names."

"Come, let us go away," replied Giuseppe, with blanched cheeks.

"No, no, Giuseppe; tell me, tell me."

"'David and Nathan,' and 'The Sermon on the Mount,'" said Giuseppe hoarsely.

"These are the duke's," gasped Alperto, suffering his friend to lead him away. "I have lost my Bianca; but come, Giuseppe," he added, "we will go to the cathedral, and there witness my noble lady's sacrifice for me."

Vainly did Giuseppe protest. Alberto would have his way, and the two friends entered the old cathedral, and took seats in the gloomy transept.

"See, see, Alberto; there are the paintings!" exclaimed Giuseppe, in raptures.

"Merciful Heaven!" ejaculated Alberto; "the hand of an angel painted them. He deserves thee, my Bianca."

On the opposite wall, facing the young men, with the rich light of the eastern chancel windows falling directly on them, were the two paintings.

One represented Nathan as he denounced David with the words, "Thou art the man!" The prophet's bent figure, tattered clothes, and aged face, with its mingled look of scorn and pity, presented a strange contrast to the youthful monarch's rich, graceful robes, and handsome face, from which the expression of indignation had not wholly passed away.

The other painting, called "The Sermon on the Mount," represented a woman ministering to the wants of a beggar.

The face of the woman Alberto recognized at once. It had been drawn from a portrait of the Lady Bianca.

The young man groaned, and hid his face in his hands.

Presently there was the flourish of trumpets, and the organ swelled joyously as the Lady Bianca moved slowly up the aisle. She looked up at the paintings, and a blush came into her face; then she knelt devoutly for a few seconds, the music died away, and there was profound silence in the vast cathedral.

The Count Paulo, her uncle, turned and faced the congregation.

"Alberto Romani will take his place by the Lady Bianca's side, as a reward for his genius."

The count's voice rang through the cathedral.

"Wake up, wake up, Alberto!" exclaimed Giuseppe; "you are the bridegroom—the count says you are. St. Michael must have painted those pictures for you, and sent the angels to place them in the church."

He almost dragged Alberto forward, and, before the young man recovered himself, the bishop had commenced the ceremony.

Alberto knelt by the side of the blushing Bianca, and received the bishop's blessing. As they rose from their knees, a shrill voice at the end of the church called out:

"Let me go, I say, and denounce the perfidy of Alberto Romani, for those paintings are not his!"

Alberto recognized the voice of his master, Gaspardo Bellini.

Lady Bianca drew close to her husband's side.

"What means the old man, my Alberto? They cannot now separate what Heaven hath made one."

Old Gaspardo at length succeeded in reaching the count. He threw himself on his knees at the nobleman's feet.

"Pardon, my lord count—pardon Alberto; the paintings are not his, but were drawn by my servant, the boy Stephano."

The count put his hand to his sword, when the bishop stepped from the altar.

"Return your sword to its sheath, my son; the house of God is no place for such weapons. Send for Stephano, and hear the whole of the story for good Master Bellini is too much excited to tell his tale clearly."

"Here I am, my lord bishop!" and a slight, girlish figure, in a peasant's dress, stepped forward, and knelt at the churchman's feet. "I am Stephano, and it was I who gave Alberto's name to my paintings. I loved him and I knew that he and the Lady Bianca loved each other."

"Why did you substitute his name for your own?" asked the bishop.

"Because," and the girl's voice trembled, "I knew my paintings would win the prize, for I did them because I loved my art."

"Rosina!" exclaimed Alberto, coming to the girl's side, "were you Stephano, the drudge of our school?"

"I was, Alberto. I followed you from our own valley, because I loved you; and I have been near, and worked for you, all the years you have been in Bologna. But let me kiss the dear Lady Bianca, for I love her, too. When I am gone, Alberto, you will do what you promised in the studio."

Bianca raised the kneeling girl, and kissed her tenderly.

"You will live for our sakes, Rosina?"

The girl smiled faintly.

"Yes, for a little while longer," she said.

* * * * * * *

Once again the old cathedral was crowded; but the bells no longer rang joyfully—they swung slowly and mournfully in their muffled covering. The great organ sadly and reluctantly gave the harmony for the requiem chanted by the black-robed choir.

The paintings of "Nathan" and "The Sermon on the Mount" still adorned the dark walls, but they were partly hidden by the folds of crape which draped them.

Amid the sobs of the congregation, a small coffin was carried by the students of Bellini's school, and deposited in the chancel. The pall was removed, and revealed on the coffin in golden letters the name Stephano.

Items of Interest.

An amateur poet, a keen observer of human nature, in his last metrical effort informs the world that "time marches on with the slow, measured tread of a man working by the day."

In the Fiji Islands whales' teeth form the coinage. They are painted white and red, and the red are worth twenty times as much as the white. The natives carry their wealth in form of necklaces.

An eminent physician of London declares that the modern drawing room, with its carpets, cushions and curtains, is an ideal breeding place for disease germs, which are constantly recruited from the clothes of people who have arrived in public cabs.

A policeman in North Attleboro, Mass., was induced to take part in an inexcusable joke, by arresting a bridegroom on his wedding day. The joke turned against the officer when he was fined ten days' pay. He should have been bounced from the force.

The combination of metals known as German silver contains no silver in its composition, and is of Chinese, and not of German, origin. It was first introduced into Europe by the Germans, and for a long time it was not generally known that they had simply borrowed it from the Chinese.

A darky preacher in North Carolina prefaced the passing of the collection-plate with this shrewd remark: "Salvation's free, brethren; salvation's free! It don't cost nothing! But we have to pay the freight on it. We will now pass aroun' the hat an' collect the freight charges."

Fashions in millinery did not trouble Mrs. MacClean, who died a few weeks ago at New Ross, Wexford, Ireland, at the age of ninety-nine. At a recent exhibition in the town there was on view a black straw bonnet that had been worn by Mrs. MacClean for firty consecutive years without a change of shape or trimmings.

A new slang expression, now in popular use in London's smart set, is "Pull up your socks!" It is utterd in contradiction of something that has been just said, or is equivalent to a surprise, as "You don't mean it?" Fancy a young man saying to an elderly dowager, who has narrated a strange story, "Oh, pull up your socks!"

A havy fog, which lasted two days, proved extremely fatal to birds at Cape Grisnez, France. Over six thousand of them were found dead under the lantern of the lighthouse at that headland. They had been attracted by the light, and had been killed by flying against the lighthouse.

Not long ago the performance in the auditorium of a Seville theater was far more exciting than that on the stage. Two persons continued applauding a player while most of the audience were hissing. Some of the latter attacked the two applauders, causing fractured skulls and death.

Bread-baking tins, made of aluminum, and in the use of which the usual "greasing" is quite unnecessary, are now being placed on the market. It is also claimed for these tins that the loaves and biscuit escape that burned smell which often accompanies them when made in ordinary tins.

There is a sweeter side to both the orange and the peach, and this is the side which is farthest from the stem. The stem half of the orange is usually not so sweet and juicy as the other half, not because it received less sunshine, but brobably because the juice gravitates to the lower half.

Doctor August Schmidt, a German physician of St. Louis, has donated money for the erection of a church in that city, in which all denominations will be equally welcome to worship. There will be no sermon, no choir, and no collection-plate. An organ operated by electricity will furnish sacred music.

Lumber is becoming so scare and costly that matches are now being made of paper, rolled spirally, and dipped in wax or stearine, which prevents unrolling, and gives rigidity. The roll is cut into lengths, which are then dipped in the phosporus composition. Paper matches are said to burn well.

Pursued the Wrong Lady.

Two ladies, one getting off and the other entering the car, had passed each other, when a male passenger, seeing a pocketbook on the floor, jumped to the conclusion that it had been dropped by the lady who had left the car and started to return it to her. The car had started, and the man with the pocketbook was still in pursuit of the supposed loser, when the lady who had entered the car missed her pocketbook. She was told what had become of it. The car was stopped and she got off. As the car got under way again the passengers saw the man with the pocketbook pursuing the lady whom he thought had lost it, while he was followed by the other lady.

The incident reminded one who saw it of a happening on a Western Maryland railroad train. A passenger alighted at a station, leaving a satchel in the seat. As the train got under way another passenger noticed the satchel, grabbed it hastily and, throwing up a window, handed it to one of those on the platform with instructions to give it to the passenger who had just alighted. This had hardly been done, when the train was going at full speed and the owner of the satchel began inquiring for his property. The man who handed the satchel out will be careful hereafter to ascertain the owner of property in such cases.

Those Pigeonholed Manuscripts.

Magazine Editor—This is a grand article; noble, glorious! By some renowned writer, isn't it?

Assistant—No, sir; by one Tom Hayseed, of Hayseedville. Shall I send it back?

Editor—No, it's too good to lose. Put it away until he becomes famous.

THE BEAUTY MASK.

BY JANE ELLIS JOY.

"Ouch!" said the girl. But she did not apply her handkerchief to her needle-pricked finger soon enough, and a tiny red drop fell on the dainty white satin wedding-gown that she was sewing. "Gracious! what have I done!' she wailed, seeing the mishap.

Eight young sewing women, seated about the large room, were looking at the tragic spot with consternation when Miss Arroway appeared in the open doorway.

Instantly the head dressmaker summed up the situation. "Nanny Hutchins, you will have to pay for a yard of new satin to make another front for that waist,' she said sternly. "I'll warrant you were talking about the beaux when you jagged your finger.'

"Yes, ma'am," apologized the culprit, meekly, as she took up the scissors and began to rip.

"And you were not talking without listeners," pursued the dressmaker, disapprovingly. "Girls," looking around at the guilty-looking group, "this silly talk about young men will have to be stopped in the sewing-room. It interferes with the work."

"Oh, Miss Arroway, it's the only fun we have!" came protestingly in an undertone from one of the boldest of the girls. The dressmaker, however, took no notice of the remark as she turned and walked away with a rustle of silken skirts.

Decidedly handsome, and possessing a superb figure, Miss Arroway, always faultlessly dressed, was a good advertisement for her fashionable establishment. Some of her customers who had been abroad said she looked like a duchess. The satisfaction of knowing that she was running up a big bank account was very sweet to Miss Arroway. She had made her own way in the world, and she was proud of her achievements, and intensely self-satisfied.

Yet there were moments when Barbara Arroway was disposed to look at the "seamy" side of things, not excepting her own prosperity. To know that she would never want for food, clothes and shelter did not appeal to any enthusiasm. There were moments when she looked back half regretfully to the "what might have been."

Waiting now in her luxuriously furnished reception-room for a customer with whom she had an appointment, she fell to picturing the home of her young girlhood in the little village of Garfield.

There was the Hoyt cottage behind the poplar trees, and there was the lane along which David was wont to pass with his green bag of books slung over his shoulder when he was studying at the medical school. Had she understood David's love when she refused to be his wife because he could not support her and his mother in separate houses? The Hoyts, though rather poor compared with some newcomers in Garfield, belonged to the "old aristocracy." It had been considered almost an "audacious" thing for Barbara Arroway to reject David Hoyt.

She remembered how David had looked when she had seen him last. It was a September afternoon fifteen years ago. She was just nineteen; he three years older. They had stepped out of the parlor of Barbara's home to the little front porch, which was covered with vines. They had been talking about the arrangements for the wedding, and of the future housekeeping. Barbara insisted on having her own way. "If it can't be as I wish, we will not be married," she had said finally.

There was a thrill of anguish in David's voice as he asked, "Do you mean it, Barbara?" She had answered coldly that she did.

Changes came about in the Arroway family—which was a small one—and Barbara was soon left alone. She went to Philadelphia and learned dressmaking. As time passed she often wondered how it was with David. She had seen the notice of his mother's death several years ago in a newspaper. Then, incidentally, she had heard that David had left Garfield. Occasionally, when her mind was at liberty to roam away from her business, she took a kind of sterile pleasure in dramatizing little scenes in which David Hoyt was back in her life.

Still waiting in the reception-room, she was building an air-castle when Nanny Hutchins came to ask a question about a garment to be sewed. Nanny's eyes were red; she seemed to have been crying.

When the instructions had been given, Nanny's feelings became uncontrollable. "Say, Miss Arroway," she burst out, "you are awful hard on us girls, forbiddin' us to talk about our young men! I don't mind payin' for the yard of satin; but not gettin' allowed to talk about—what's interestin'! Why, you don't know how it makes us feel to be workin' away all day, and not a word of fun to liven us up! Us girls don't have much fun outside. We can't afford to go to gay places, and most of us ain't got homes suited to giving parties. So, all the good times we have we get from talkin' about each other's beaux. Say, Miss Arroway," appealingly, "didn't girls talk about young men when you was young?"

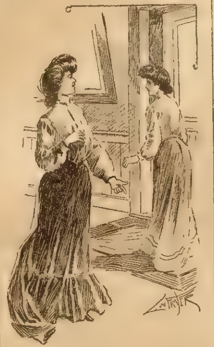
Miss Arroway had been a little amused at Nanny's frankness, and was half inclined to rescind her lately-spoken harsh edict in favor of more liberty of speech in the sewing-room. But Nanny's final unhappy question literally stunned her. "When she was young!' When had she ceased to be young? A rush of color submerged the creamy whiteness of Barbara's complexion. Catching her breath, she said sharply:

"Nanny Hutchins, if you ever speak to me this way again, I will discharge you!'

The crushed offender crept away with hanging head, and Miss Arroway's heart thumped and fluttered against the whalebones of her shapely bodice. Not for a long while had her composure been so shaken. It had never occurred to her that time had wrought the slightest change in her face since the days of her early womanhood. She attributed the fact to her excellent health and her habitual serenity of mind. In imagining the little scenes with David it afforded her a thrill of girlish pleasure to think of David saying "You are as pretty as ever, Barbara."

Directly a note came from the customer whom she was expecting stating that the lady would not come until the next morning. Miss Arroway got ready to go out. She wanted a breath of fresh air. She wanted also to consult a celebrated "beauty specialist" about the preservation of her youthful appearance. Positively she must not grow any older looking. Perhaps little wrinkles were coming, and very young people, like Nanny, already saw a hint of them.

As a result of her visit to the professional preserver and repairer of feminine loveliness, Miss Arroway returned home carrying a box containing a beauty-mask a frightful-looking affair made of chamois skin—to be strapped over the face and worn at night. It was provided with a goodly-sized nose, openings for the nostrils, and slits to fit the eyes. The "beauty doctor" had assured her that this was the best device for preserving the complexion and warding off wrinkles.



"I WILL DISCHARGE YOU."

At 10 o'clock that night Miss Arroway stood before the mirror in her dressing-room smiling at herself as she buckled the mask over her comely face. She was dressed in her gymnastic suit—for of late she had taken up physical culture, and in obedience to the rules laid down in the system she was following, she went through a course of exercises every night before retiring.

"Good gracious!" mumbled Barbara into the mouthless mask, "suppose the house should get on fire in the night, and I hadn't time to take this horrible thing off!"

She thought of other emergencies and mishaps that might bring about an embarrassing exposure; but she finally stifled her misgivings with characteristic fortitude. Every enterprise and experiment, she knew, called for some kind of risk, and some sacrifices.

Instead of finding herself, as usual, ready for repose after the exercises, Barbara felt very wide awake. That miserable remark of Nanny's had quite upset her equilibrium. "I guess I'll sit up till I get sleepy," she whispered into the mask. She turned up the gas-lamp that stood on a little table behind a high dressing-screen, and sat down to read a new book of original poems lately presented to her by a literary patron. With Barbara the reading of the book was undertaken rather as a matter of pure business. The lady would be "tickled" if she should refer to the poems.

Barbara read on bravely. At "The silvery moonbeams fell aslant her shadowy hair" she was nodding. She looked dreamily at the next line. A pleasant drowsiness was stealing over her. She wished she was in bed. As a nerve-quieter the poems were a success. Barbara's eyelids closed, and she saw visions—"shadowy hair" and "silvery moonbeams" mixed with other shadowy images that her brain conjured up. A little clock on a shelf pointed to half-past twelve. Outside was the dead quietness of midnight in a retired part of the city.

An alert ear might have detected a faint soud as the knob of the door leading into the hallway slowly turned. Noiselessly the door was pushed open, and a man with his hat pulled over his forehead looked in. He did not see the woman nodding behind the screen; he saw some glittering jewels on the bureau, where Barbara had put them when she changed her dress.

With catlike quietness the man moved across the room as if he were walking on padded shoes.

Miss Arroway awoke with a jerk. She knew that it was no vision that she saw through the screen, but a very real burglar in the room. Two women servants slept in the back wing of the third story. These and Miss Arroway were the only inmates of the house.

Although the coming of a burglar was not one of the contingencies that had figured potentially in Barbara's mind, she was probably as well prepared to act now as if she had rehearsed the whole matter. Without a word of warning she rose and sprang upon the intruder, seizing him from behind firmly by both arms so that he could not use any weapon that he might happen to have.

"Now I've got you!" came in a strange, unearthly voice from the expressionless yellow face.

Expecting resistance, Barbara now called to the servants upstairs—calling as loudly as the mask would let her. But there was no resistance. Caught in the act of reaching out his hand for the jewels, the man had got a sight of Barbara in the mirror, and his face was a study of surprise and fright as, glancing over his shoulder, he saw the original, in whose clutch he was. In his limited experience as a housebreaker he had never encountered such a monster. It may have occurred to him that the powers of evil had betrayed him. At any rate he collapsed, sinking helplessly to the floor at Barbara's feet.

"Gracious! Goodness! The man has fainted!" said she, looking down at the motionless figure. Well, matters might have been worse. For a moment at least she was safe, and she proceeded to improve the uncertain lease of time by rushing to the front window and calling for help, in the hope that a chance policeman, or some neighbor whose front windows might be open, might hear.

Meanwhile she was tugging desperately at the beauty-mask, which muffled her voice to a degree that made it hardly recognizable to herself.

It would have been better if Barbara had found the mechanical fastenings of the mask, and removed it properly; but, with a burglar lying on the floor, and no help in sight, who can be expected to be calm and methodical? She pulled and jerked the straps of the mask, and wished that she had never heard of a "beauty doctor." At last she succeeded—not in getitng the mask off, but in twisting it to one side so that she could not look out of the eye-slits. This was making bad worse. She thought she heard the sound of steps on the street below, and directly some one called up, "What's the matter?"

"Oh, don't come up for a moment! Wait—a minute! Oh—what am I saying? Yes—something's wrong—call a policeman!"

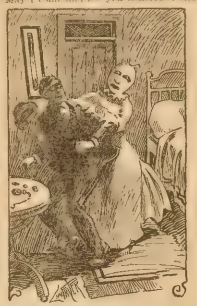
The muffled tones could hardly have been intelligible. Fortunately the burglar, who had picked the lock of the front door, had left the door open. Directly Barbara heard the sound of steps on the stairs. Of course it was a relief to know that help was coming. But oh! the mask! She must, she must get it off! A happy inspiration suggested the scissors, and luckily she found a pair at hand. Snip, snip, went the strong elastic bands of the beauty-mask.

Barbara was not sure whether or not she had been seen sweeping the hideous thing off her face and flinging it in a corner. She knew she was talking to a tall, well-dressed man, but in her confusion she purposely avoided looking directly at him. As Barbara explained the situation the stranger stooped down to feel the burglar's pulse.

"It's just a simple case of fainting," he said, assuringly. And then, in the old considerate tone that Barbara knew so well: "I'm so afraid you have had a terrible shock, Miss Arroway."

"Oh, David—David!"

Sinking into the depths of a chair, with David's arm supporting her, the room seemed to Barbara to be swimming around. She heard the two maids come thumping downstairs in unshod feet, and she saw their scared faces. She knew that a policeman came in, and took away the burglar the latter promising as he let himself be led away, that he would never break into a house again because of a "turrible sight" that he had seen.



"NOW I'VE GOT YOU!"

"May I come and see you tomorrow, Miss Arroway?" asked Dr. David Hoyt, as he said good-night.

And Barbara whispered "Yes."

The next day Miss Arroway said pleasantly to her "hands" assembled in the sewing-room:

"Girls, I do not wish to restrict you too much as regards subjects of conversation. Hereafter, unless when working on very delicate fabrics, you are at liberty to talk about—things and persons that interest you."

There was a chórus of "Thank you's," and some smiles and blushes.

"And, Nanny," added Miss Aroway, "you will not be charged with that yard of satin."

Nanny smiled her thanks, and wondered if the tall, fine-looking gentleman that she had seen in the parlor had not had something to do with "madam's" softened manner and gentle kindliness. But she did not retail this bit of gossip broadly to her companions. A sense of gratitude inspired her to [illegible] method.

[illegible] she said. ""Miss Arroway's gettin' handsomer every day. I'll bet a dime she'll be married before six months."

No one covered Nanny's wager. If any one had she would have lost.

THE OLD PLEA

He "Didn't Know it Was Loaded."

The coffee drinker seldom realizes that coffee contains the drug Caffein, a serious poison to the heart and nerves causing many other forms of disease noticeably dyspepsia.

"I was a lover of coffee and used it for many years and did not realize the bad effects I was suffering from its use.

"At first I was troubled with indigestion but did not attribute the trouble to the use of coffee but thought it arose from other causes. With these attacks I had sick headache, nausea and vomiting. Finally my stomach was in such a condition I could scarcely retain any food.

"I consulted a physician; was told all my troubles came from indigestion, but was not informed what caused the indigestion, so I kept on with the coffee and kept on with the troubles, too, and my case continued to grow worse from year to year until it developed into chronic diarrhea, nausea and severe attacks of vomiting so I could keep nothing on my stomach and became a mere shadow reduced from 159 to 128 pounds.

"A specialist informed me I had a very severe case of catarrh of the stomach which had got so bad he could do nothing for me and I became convinced my days were numbered.

"Then I chanced to see an article setting forth the good qualities of Postum and explaining how coffee injures people so I concluded to give Postum a trial. I soon saw the good effects—my headaches were less frequent, nausea and vomiting only came on at long intervals and I was soon a changed man, feeling much better.

"Then I thought I could stand coffee again, but as soon as I tried it my old troubles returned and I again turned to Postum. Would you believe it, I did this three times before I had sense enough to quit coffee for good and keep on with the Postum; the result is I am now a well man with no more headaches, sick stomach or vomiting and have already gained back to 147 pounds." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Look in pkgs. for the famous little book, "The Road to Wellville."

Two Readings.

Funny Fellow (entering a restaurant) I see you have a sign out here "Oysters. Families supplied."

Proprietor—Yes sir.

Funny Fellow—Well, I'd like a family. He, he!

Proprietor—Sam, bring an oyster's family for the gentleman.

CURE FOR LIQUOR AND TOBACCO.

The Kansas Anti-Liquor Society is mailing free a recipe for the cure of the liquor habit. It can be given secretly in food. Also one for the tobacco habit that can be given secretly. The only request they make is that you do not sell recipes, but give copies to friends. Address Kansas Anti-Liquor Society, 15 Gray Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

All Ready for Illumination.

A little girl, who was having her hair combed, noticed that it gave forth crackles and sparks, and asked her mother the reason.

"There's electricity in your hair, darling."

With awe in her voice the child replied: "Oh, mother, aren't we wonderfully made! I have 'lectricity in my hair, and grandma has gas in her stomach!"

Ladies, Preserve Your Youthful Appearance.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results.

Send ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

A Cunning Bishop.

Bishop—Never again preach against or reject so-called tainted money.

Curate—Yes, sir; but——

Bishop—No buts; if we intend to successfully compete with the devil on modern lines, we must first ruin him financially.

Every Lady Read This.

Years ago when I was a sufferer, an old nurse told me of a wonderful cure for Leucorrhœa, Displacements, Painful Periods, Uterine and Ovarian troubles. It cured me in one month. It is a simple, harmless lotion that can be prepared by any one having the recipe. I will send it free to every suffering sister who writes to me. Address Mrs A. Hudnut South Bend, Indiana.

A Way Out.

Anglomaniac—That's the way it goes. If we hunt foxes, folks say we're cruel; if we hunt aniseed bags, folks laugh at us. What can we hunt, without exciting indignation or ridicule?

Small Boy—Rats!

A Dainty Little Maid.

Everyone ought to have her. She is dressed in pretty colors and changes the color of her skirt herself when it is going to rain. She indicates when it is wise to take an umbrella or when you can do without. She is the simplest and best of barometers. She is an ornament, a good seller for agents, a pretty gift, a good business souvenir and useful to anyone. She or one of her sisters comes postpaid with full directions for only 10 cents. W. P. Randolph & Co., 78 Dearborn St., Chicago.

BOY'S
AND
GIRL'S
CORNER

...By...
COLONEL PRENTIS
INGRAHAM.

A WEST POINT CADET;

...Or...
A BOY'S FIGHT FOR
FAME.

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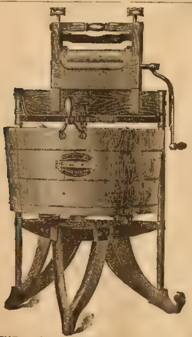


Washing by Gravity

Pay Me Out Of What It Saves You

You've never seen a Washer like this!

Because it has only been invented a short time ago.

It is as far ahead of ordinary washers as a horse would be ahead of a cow in a race.

And it leaves the Washboard so far behind that it's lost from sight in the distance.

We've sold thousands and thousands of Washers after putting each one of them out on a month's trial test.

Think of that for a test of goodness.

We call the machine shown in the picture our 1900 "Gravity" Washer.

You know, "Gravity" is what makes a stone roll down hill.

And our new Washer is called the "Gravity" because it almost works itself by practically the same principle as the stone rolling down hill.

* * *

You throw the clothes into a tub of soapy water, start off the machine, and the Gravity does nearly all the rest.

I don't mean that it washes all the dirty clothes without a little help from you—mind that!

You must throw the clothes into the tub by hand, and start off the machine working, by hand, and keep it going by hand while it drives the soapy water to and fro through the clothes.

Then you must (in about six minutes after the Gravity has been washing) stop the tub, and run the washed clothes through the Wringer, by hand.

So you see it isn't all play. There's some work left for the Woman.

But she can wash a tub full of very dirty clothes with this new "Gravity Washer" in less than Six minutes, by the clock.

And she can wash them with her Head—her Brains—instead of with her hands, because, she can make the Machine do nearly all the work. She hasn't got to bend over a steaming tub of suds with the "Gravity Washer," nor work one of those back-breaking threshing-machines they call "Washers" in the hardware stores.

The "Gravity Washer" won't tear the finest piece of lace—it won't break a button—nor it won't wear the thinnest white clothes.

Because, all the washing is done by driving soapy water through the threads of the dirty clothes.

And this is done chiefly by Gravity—by the same thing that makes a stone roll down hill.

And this Washer is sold so it must pay for itself.

* * *

Now, I want to send one of these "Gravity Washers" to any person I believe to be honest, for a month's free trial, so they can prove what I say to be true.

I don't want a penny from you for the month's use of it, remember, unless you decide to keep it after that.

But, if you find it will save you its whole cost, you may pay me after each washing 60c a week for it, or $2.00 a month, out of what it saves you, till the machine is fully paid for.

And, you needn't decide whether you'll keep the Washer or not till after you've tested it a full Month—free of charge.

I will pay the freight myself both ways—and I don't ask a penny of security from you.

If you feel you can do without the "Gravity Washer" after you've used it a month, I will take it back from you, without a penny from you for its use, or a growl from me.

Now, How could I make anything out of that kind of deal if our new "Gravity Washer" wouldn't really do all I say it will?

Write me to-day if you want this "Gravity Washer on a month's free trial. Address plainly: R. F. Bieber, Treas. 1900 Washer Co., 6071 Henry St., Binghamton, N.Y., or 355 Yonge St., Toronto, Can.

CHAPTER VIII.

A RACE FOR LIFE.

Scout Buckskin Jack had not seen the stage coach when it dove away from the hotel. He had not, therefore, observed that it contained a lady passenger. She was the only passenger in the coach for the long ride to Fort C.

Bill Buckner drove along, his eyes constantly on the alert for the secret foe, for just at that time there happened to be danger on the trail.

Had it been known at the Fort that there was a lady passenger to come through, a cavalry escort would have been sent to guard the coach from the railway station.

She arrived at the railway station just in time for the departure of the coach for Fort C. She was two days ahead of time, but determined that she would not wait for a military escort. She was a lady of forty years of age, with a sweet, refined face, and was, in fact, none other than the wife of Major Baldwin, the Commander.

Bill Buckner had kept from her any story of expected trouble, and after she had left the station she had asked him if there was not danger from the Sioux.

"Yes, madam, there is, and I hated to start through with you, but duty's duty; but maybe we will get through without trouble," was the blunt answer.

A short distance further on, the keen eyes of Bill Buckner saw coming across an open valley, a score of Sioux. There was nothing to do but to run for it, and Bill Buckner knew the trail and what his horses could do, so started at full speed. Holding his rein between his knees, he laid his repeating rifle upon the top of the coach, ready for work.

Thus the coach kept on for a mile and the Indians on their ponies had gained but little. But when the trail became rougher, they began to catch up, and Bill Buckner for two purposes determined to fire. One was, to see if he could pick a redskin off at such a long distance as the Sioux were from him, and the other was to see if his shots were not heard by someone he could depend upon to aid him. He fired three shots when running along in a level part of the trail, and the third shot brought a warrior from his saddle.

The Indians gave a wild war cry, and urged their ponies forward.

The lady passenger had taken from her satchel a revolver, and though her face was pale, there was no fear upon it. She was a soldier's wife, and she meant to die, if die she must, by her own hand, and without fear.

Seeing the Indian fall from his asddle, she discovered she had, at least, a brave protector in Bill Buckner, and a man who knew how to shoot, but she also knew that it was a race for life and with great odds in favor of the redskins.

The shots of Bill Buckner had been heard by two persons riding along the trail after the coach. The keen ears of Wallace Preston had detected them, and he at once attracted attention of the scout to them, for these were the two men following the coach.

"You are right, sir," said Buckskin Jack. "I heard two of them."

"There were three of them. Perhaps the coach is in danger. Come on!"

Buckskin was too good a scout not to obey the army officer. They spurred forward at full speed and came in sight of the redskins on the trail ahead.

Instantly the scout cried:

"They are chasing the coach, sir, but we can get through the canyon in yonder range and catch up to the coach before they do."

The two turned off, Wallace Preston easily yielding to the superior knowledge of the scout. They rode hard for a couple of miles and came out into the trail just ahead of the coach.

"We have made it, sir. What shall we do? Stand and fight it out?"

"I think there is a lady in the coach. We had better run for it. She must get up on the box with the driver and crouch down in the boot, so as to protect her. We will get in the coach, tying our horses to the leaders and fight back as we run."

"The very plan, sir, and if you are a tenderfoot officer out here, you know your business," answered Buckskin Jack with admiration.

The coach was halted for an instant. The two dismounted, hitched their horses rapidly to the heads of the leaders, and they sprang within, while Lieutenant Preston aided the lady passenger to a seat with the driver, telling her she must sit down on the foot-board so that the coach would fully protect her from the shots of the Indians who could not be very far behind.

"Not over a quarter of a mile but, now we can get it against them!" cried Buckskin Jack.

The minute's rest seemed to have helped the coach horses, who had had thus far a four-mile run, and Bill Buckner started his team ahead again at full speed.

Lieutenant Preston and the scout got into the coach with their rifles, and awaited the result in the race for life. It was not two minutes before the Indians came in sight. Bill Buckner was not now forcing his horses. He would let the Indians believe that the team was tired out and could go no faster.

The Indians, in coming in sight of the coach once more, came forward with wild war cries, intending to strike terror to the hearts of those within the coach. The lady passenger was perfectly calm. She sat on the foot-board, and seemed willing to trust her defenders, but she still grasped her satchel in which was the revolver which she had when in the coach.

The Indians came on more rapidly, and not wishing it to be thought that he knew it all, Wallace Preston asked the scout when he considered the best time to fire.

"I will tell you, sir, and we can drop two of them at least. Indians are eager to learn, and just as eager to quit seeking knowledge when they have learned all they want to," was Buckskin Jack's reply.

Several minutes after, while the coach was bounding along, the two opened fire from the coach. Both the lieutenant's and the scout's shots told. Each dropped an Indian from the saddle.

"See here!" called Lieutenant Preston, eagerly, "I had an accomplishment when at West Point by which I could fool the buglers themselves. It is a kind of a talent with me, and I move that we halt the coach, and I will give the bugle call and see if it will not make those Indians believe that we have re-inforcements coming."

"The very thing, sir. You are a dandy, if you are a tenderfoot!" was Buckskin Jack's reply.

At Lieutenant Preston's suggestion they again took aim and fired at the coming Indians.

Then Lieutenant Preston called out:

"Halt at a good place where you can see ahead, driver, and let me spring a little trap I have in view upon those Indians."

"I will do it, sir,' was Bill Buckner's answer.

Within two minutes more, Bill Buckner drew rein, and just over a slight ridge in the trail. At the same instant, with the coach at a standstill, Lieutenant Preston and Buckskin Jack fired, and with fatal results.

Then with the coach door open, loud, clear and thrilling, came the notes of what appeared to be a bugle calling troops into action. It rang indeed like wildest bugle notes, and was wafted back over the trail, until it reached the coming redskins, who were dashing forward with renewed cries of fury and triumph mingled.

Both the lady passenger and Bill Buckner were startled with what to them was the call of a bugle. The driver shouted and waved his hat, though he saw no troopers. The lady passenger sprang to her feet, and uttered a cry of joy, while she said:

"Troops from the Fort!"

Out of the coach sprang Wallace Preston, rifle in hand, and from the other side Buckskin Jack leaped to the ground ready for red hot work at bay, if it had to come.

The Indians did just what Buckskin Jack had expected they would do. They were seeking knowledge, and that clear bugle call had convinced them that the coach had stopped on account of seeing troopers ahead on the trail.

With yells of fury, they turned their poines about, and fled with all speed back the way they had come. The humanity of the Indians then called upon them to go back and look for their comrades who had fallen under the fire of Lieutenant Preston and Buckskin Jack, and place at the same time as great a distance as possible between themselves and the supposed approach of the troopers.

Buckskin Jack gave one of his inspiring war cries as the Indians turned, and whispered.

"Repeat that bugle call, please, sir."

Wallace Preston did so, and then it was that both the lady passenger and Bill Buckner discovered who the splendid imitator was.

"Splendid, sir, splendid!" cried the lady passenger.

"Lieutenant, the bugler can't beat it!" cried Bill Buckner.

The Indians were gone entirely out of sight, and not wishing to take any further chances, Lieutenant Preston assuming command, got back into the coach, and ordered Buckskin Jack to follow him, while Bill Buckner was told to continue on at a brisk pace, once more.

For several miles this was kept up, and it was very evident to the scout that the Indians, expecting ambush, had not dared to come back on the trail.

Then a short halt was made, and Lieutenant Preston, aided the fair passenger into the coach once more.

It was nearing sunset when the flag, flying above Fort C came in sight, and entering the Fort the coach drove rapidly up to Headquarters, where Major Baldwin came out to discover what visitor had arrived for him.

"My wife!" he cried in astonishment, as the fair passenger was aided to alight from the coach by Lieutenant Preston.

The secret was out. It was the wife of Major Baldwin.

To this brave young officer, who gave me his name as Wallace Preston, do we all owe our lives, I'm sure," cried the lady.

"What? is this Lieutenant Preston? I am glad to meet you, sir, and to welcome you! But you are ahead of time! Aud to you I owe the great service of having protected my wife, for, from what she says, I know there has been trouble on the trail."

"There has been trouble, sir, and the lieutenant there is a fighter, and a man to tie to, for we were chased by a band of Indians."

"Yes, sir, he took the trick, when, as a stranger out here, I did not think he held a winning card," was Buckskin Jack's reply.

Such was the arrival of Lieutenant Wallace Preston, an officer that wore the Blue at the post of duty, to which he was ordered.

CHAPTER IX.

WINNING HIS SPURS.

That Wallace Preston had arrived at camp C. with flying colors, as may be said, he could not but realize with the greeting given him by the Commander of the Fort, and also when he saw his quarters in the Bachelor's Club of the garrison.

The young officers there welcomed him with hearty good will. They may be clannish toward others not wearing shoulder straps, but they are never so toward each other. They are bound together in a society of good comradship.

"Preston, you have it rich," said one of the officers

"Yes. Not only to come out here with the honors of your class a cadet from West Point, but to bring the coach through as you did, in which was the Commandants wife as a passenger, sends you to the top notch.'

Such were the comments to him of the young officers, while the enlisted men quickly took in the situation and made comments, more expressive, perhaps, but decidedly hearty. One and all seemed to like the dashing, handsome fellow, and it was very evident that his record had gone before him to Fort C—for they all kenw him well.

The day after his arrival Lieutenant Preston was invited to dine with the Commandant, an invitation which he appreciated and promptly accepted. He found in Mrs. Baldwin a woman whom he could greatly admire, and he found he had won a good friend in the Fort, where all were strangers to him.

Buckskin Jack, the scout, went to the scout's headquarters, but he had much to say of the daring cleverness of the young lieutenant, to whom he had become greatly attached in their short acquaintance.

"You are right in it, Preston," said an officer, coming to his quarters a few days after his arrival and bearing in his hand and official looking paper he was looking at.

"How do you mean?" asked Wallace.

"Well, a scout has brought in information of quite a large band of Indians moving in this direction, and your troop, and "D" Troop is always winning the honors, it seems—is ordered to go out and disperse them. You, of course, will have a chance at redskins soon after your arrival. This is what all cubs devoutly hope for when they come to the Fort, but usually they are not so fortunate as you are."

"When do we start?" asked Wallace, briskly, and he added:

"I am indeed glad to learn of this, for from my boyhood I have been anxious to see a redskin on the warpath."

"You go within the hour, and Buckskin Jack goes as the scout of the troop."

"I will be ready before that time," was the answer of Wallace Preston.

Before the time set, Troop D filed out from Fort C., and Wallace Preston was looked upon as fortunate indeed to get at once into action, as it was expected the troop would do.

The soldiers and the officers too, it may be said, watched the young lieutenant mount his horse. The horse was up in the air with all feet, wild as a buck, but Wallace was as firmly seated upon his back as was his saddle.

His first command showed that he knew just what to do, and was not at all nonplussed at having the whole garrison watch him, for a new man is always watched like a hawk, to see what he is made of.

Buckskin Jack went on ahead, and the troop left the Fort on a trot amid the cheers of all.

Buckskin had had a talk with the scout who had brought the information of the band of Indians, and he decided just where he would guide the troop to find them. He told Captain Ames of his idea, and as the scout was well known as a reliable man, his ideas were acted upon.

It was in the morning when the troop left, and by a new trail, as he well knew how to do, Buckskin Jack reached the spot where he intended heading for the band several hours before sunset.

"They will either pass here, sir, within the hour, or if not we can go and hunt them up."

Captain Ames immediately placed his men in position—and a good one to defend from an attack, while Buckskin Jack went forth to find if there was any indications of the Indian's approach.

Jack had not been gone twenty minutes before he came back on a run.

"They're coming, sir, and not more than twenty miles away, while there are more of them than I would like to see. They must have been joined by some other band since last seen," said the scout.

"Alright, scout, we'll meet them!" was Captain Ames' prompt reply.

After a time the Indians came in sight, and evidently with no thought of any troops anywhere in the neighborhood. They had seen the scout's trail left by his horse whe he had gone forward to reconnoiter, and they were following it curiously. Captain Ames determined to halt as he was on the ridge of the hill. The horses were kept well back out of sight. The advance was ordered to be rady to open fire on the Indians under cover of which the balance of the troop would charge. The advance guard ,that had been, was then to act as a reserve, and an effort would be made to drive the redskins in a wild flight at the start.

Captain Ames had with him eighty-five men, all told, but he saw that he would have nearly five to one to fight, as the Indians far outnumbered him.

The rifles opened at the command as the Indians got half way up the hill, and the mounted men at once came forward and sarted in a terrific charge down upon the Indians, who had been taken by surprise and thrown into disorder when fired upon. The troop went down the hill like an avalanche upon the tired warriors and ponies, and like an avalanche it swept all before it.

Wallace Preston was in front of his immediate men, and he led them in a way that showed that he was determined to keep up his fight for fame now that he had won his shoulder straps. In spite of their numbers the Indians broke and were stampeded, but not until quite a number of warriors and horses had gone down under the desperate charge.

Where the scout, Buckskin Jack, was after the charge had started no one seemed to know, and looks were cast about for him on every side.

It might have been caused by it's being his first real charge against foes that Lieutenant Wallace Preston became seperated from his men The last seen of him he was in the midst of the struggling redskins and cutting his way through them, his sabre in one hand and his revolver in the other. When that sabre fell a redskin felt it, when that revolver flashed, a redskin went down. But the lieutenant was not excited. He was perfectly cool, and that a dash of Indian warriors behind him had seperated his men from him there seemed no doubt.

But when the Indians started in full flight, Wallace Preston was not to be seen.

The last seen of him was when he was dashing away in pursuit of a half dozen redskins who were fleeing before him. Wallace Preston saw that he had gotten into a trap, and he rescued himself from it in a most skillful manner. He could not turn and dash his men, for there were the maddened Indians between them. Knowing the great speed of his horse, he pushed on with mighty bounds, and eluding those about him, was unnoticed as he dashed into some timber on his right. It gave his horse a chance of a breathing spell and himself time to think.

To his surprise he was not followed. The Indians had been too busy to notice the man cut off from his troop.

The troop made another desperate charge under Captain Ames to keep the Indians in flight, and set them going at a rapid pace, while they broke in every direction.

This much Wallace Preston saw. He discovered that he would soon be seen by a large party that was coming through the timber. He determined, therefore, to go forward the way that the Indians were flying, make a flank movement, and regain his troop from the rear. This he did, riding rapidly and keeping all the timber that he could between himself and his red foes. Single handed he knew that he could do nothing.

Having escaped from the sight of the Indians, he began at a rapid gallop to still wind his way to the right. This he did for several miles. He heard the cheers of the troopers, and saw that the fight had kept up in a manner that had stampeded the foe utterly. He was glad of this, indeed, but from the cessation of the troopers' cries, he was aware that the pursuit had been checked for some reason. What that reason was, he of course, did not know.

When continuing his flank movement he came to a position where several times he saw bands of Indians, and to avoid them, he had to go further and further away.

Thus over an hour passed, and the young lieutenant had gone quite a number of miles from where he knew his troop must be.

Crossing an open space, he came to a thicket, and not expecting to find any Indians there, he rode directly towards it, when to his surprise, when he neared it, he saw an Indian pony. He halted suddely, and a second glance showed him but one Indian and that Indian was a girl. She stood in full view with an arrow drawn to its head in her bow, and her manner was decidedly hostile.

Wallace Preston was not one to fire at a form his keen sight told him was a woman. But were there other Indians present, was his question.

He saw now that the Indian pony he had been looking at, drop suddenly to the ground. Had the Indian girl caused it to do this? Keeping his revolver level, Wallace Preston advanced, and called out in English, because he could not speak the Indian tongue:

"You are my prisoner!"

"Do you intend to kill my father?" was the surprising question he received in pure English.

"I kill no one who surrenders! Where is your father?"

"Lying here, wounded."

"Then he is safe, as you are!" And Wallace Preston saw that at the girl's feet lay an Indian form clad in all the regalia of a chief.

He kept advancing, revolver in hand, and a moment after came upon a strange scene.

A red spot upon the pony proved that the chief had been wounded and that was what caused him to fall. He now lay at the girl's feet. The Indian chief, for his war bonnet showed him to be one, lay out full length and seemed evidently to be suffering greatly from several wounds he displayed.

"Who are you, for I notice that you speak English well?" asked Wallace Preston. And he replaced his revolver and held up his hands in token of friendship.

"I am Minnehonga, the daughter of the great chief, Bad Face, who lies here, sick. If you try to kill him, I will kill you!" she said, promptly, and the arrow was still in her fingers as though to carry out her threat.

"You mistake me, girl. I would do you no harm. Is your father wounded?"

"Yes, badly so, and his pony is dead. He would not let me go into the fight, and sent me here to await him. He came here wounded, as his pony was also. My pony escaped from me and is gone. We cannot get away."

"I will see if I can help your father," and throwing himself from his horse, Lieutenant Preston knelt by the side of the chief.

"See here Chief, I have heard much evil of you during the short time I have been at the fort, but you are wounded and I will not harm you. Your daughter is with you and you can mount my horse and return to the village. He is strong enough to readily carry your daughter behind you."

The Chief was hideously painted, and Wallace Preston was not sure he understood him, but he replied in broken English:

"Paleface Chief good man. Thank you heap."

Wallace Preston sought to examine his wounds, but this the chief would not allow, but said:

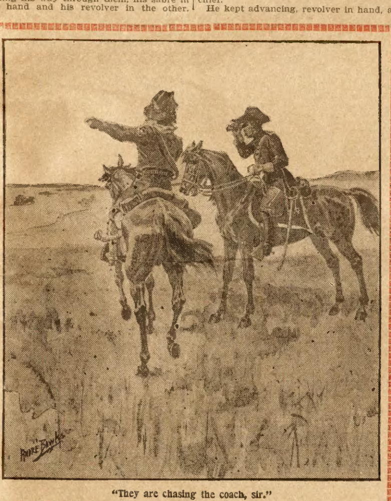
"My daughter look after wounds. We go now. Paleface heap good."

Thinking that perhaps the Indian chief might be harmed if any of the troopers did come up, and that the girl also might be captured, Wallace Preston's humane heart got the best of him.

He aided the Indian chief to mount his horse. In fact, he nearly placed him upon it with an effort of his great strength. He lifted the girl to the seat behind her father and said:

"Now you can go."

"What you do?" asked Chief Bad Face.



"They are chasing the coach, sir."

How Rapid Life is Killing Our People.

UNPRECEDENTED NUMBER OF DEATHS RESULT FROM HEART DISEASE.

The fact that 125 persons died recently in one week in New York City, from heart disease, when the death rate the corresponding week in 1904 was only 56, has given rise to the belief among physicians that New York residents, and American people generally, for that matter, are living too rapidly. The strain of business and cares attendant on fierce competition and the worry attendant on anxiety to gain wealth are given as an explanation by physicians of the conditions which exist to-day.

Doctors have established the fact that the nerve forces which control the stomach and the heart, are affected by the hurry of men in the daily scramble to bolt their food, in order to quickly resume their exciting careers. Many young men now succumb to heart disease, where 50 years ago, a case was rare when a person under 30 years of age died from this malady.

Women are also victims. This is attributed to the manner in which they worry over social engagements, also to over-work. Worry and excitement, together with many nerve shocks which come to all in their daily life, of bustle and hustle, are the principal causes which snap the heartstrings.

We Americans, both men and women, are living too fast. We work too hard and worry too much. How can the strain be best contracted and the damage done be quickest repaired? Only by humoring and assisting the stomach to act in a more healthy manner. Thus will the blood be enriched, the nerves invigorated and the action of an enfeebled heart strengthened and regulated. Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery contains just the right ingredients to do this, as will be seen from what eminent medical authorities say of the different ingredients composing it. To make the weakened stomach strong that it may properly digest the food and thus manufacture rich, red blood. Golden Seal, a prominent ingredient of the "Golden Medical Discovery" is pre-eminently the article needed. The late Prof. John M. Scudder, M. D., of Cincinnati, author of "Specific Medication," says of it:

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"Oh, your warriors are scattered and I am not afraid they will find me. I will take care of myself."

"Paleface Chief heap good man, good heart, good straight tongue. Bad Face remember him," said the Chief, while the girl, whose striking appearance had riveted the young officer's attention, held out her hand and said:

"You are a good man. Minnehonga will not forget you. But what shall I do with your horse?"

"Oh, I'll get another horse all right, never mind the horse, so that you two get away," was the prompt reply.

The Chief, who was evidently quite weak, turned the horse in direction of the trail leading back to his village, and Wallace Preston watched them until they had disappeared from sight.

"Well, this is an unlooked for happening," he muttered to himself. "Now to get back to my troopers before some strange band of retreating braves get my scalp lock."

He started out at a brisk pace, determined to still keep to his flank movement.

He well knew his danger, but it did not seem to trouble him in the least.

For half a mile or more he had tramped along, when suddenly out of some timber quite a distance ahead dashed a number of troopers. They saw him at the moment that he saw them, and they came towards him with cheers and at a full run. He continued his walk towards them and he discovered that a sergeant was in charge of the score of troopers that were coming towards him.

As they came up, he waved to them and the sergeant called out:

"We were looking for you, sir. We feared that you were killed or captured."

"No, I was lucky enough to get away, Sergeant, and was making my way back to join the troops."

"You are needed, sir. Captain Ames has been wounded and the First Lieutenant Lawson, and that leaves you in command."

"Not seriously wounded, I hope, is either officer," said Wallace Preston, while a serious look came over his face.

"The captain, sir, was pretty badly hurt, and Lieutenant Lawson sent him back in an ambulance to get him to the Fort as quickly as possible. Later Lieutenant Lawson was wounded in the arm and he sent me forward to try to find you if you had not been killed or captured."

"I will return at once, Sergeant, but I have no horse as you see."

"Mount mine, sir, and I will mount behind one of the men." And the sergeant yielded his horse to the Lieutenant.

Wallace Preston sprang into the saddle and led the way rapidly back, his face wearing an anxious look.

After a short while he called back:

"Sergeant, from what I saw the Indians are on a full run."

"They are, sir, and we thought surely they had you a prisoner if they had not killed you. That was a desperate dash you made."

"I didn't see the party coming that caught me far from my men," was the answer.

After a short ride, Scout Buckskin Jack came in sight and he waved his hat as he discovered the lieutenant.

"Glad they found you, sir! The chances were all against you, for death or capture."

"Yes, Jack, but I got out all right," was the reply, and Buckskin Jack broke in with:

"Lieutenant Lawson, sir, is worse hurt than he thought he was and we are mighty glad you are here to take command. I came to find you if possible."

"It's putting a great weight on young shoulders, Jack, to put me in command of this company."

"Things are coming your way, sir, hand over hand," said Jack, with a smile.

Wallace Preston's face showed the responsibility that was upon him, and from it he did not shrink for an instant.

"Jack," he said, seriously, "was a courier sent back to the fort for reinforcements, for we have got a large force to handle, I fear."

"Yes, sir, Captain Ames sent back for a troop or more to come with a rush, and Lieutenant Lawson sent another courier after the one with this dispatch."

"Jack, I am glad to hear that, but as I got swept off with the Indians, I took in one fact that may or may not be of use. I think that the chiefs called out orders to the different bands to meet at a given place. At least it struck me, but I had to look out for myself just then and I may have been mistaken."

"I am glad to hear that, sir, and I don't believe you are mistaken, thought you could not speak the Sioux lingo. The chiefs doubtless ordered them to retreat by a certain pass where, in a canyon, they could ambush all pursuers and cut them to pieces. Can I make a suggestion, sir?"

"Certainly, Jack, for I am certainly not so wise that I do not know that others know much more than I do."

"When you reach the place where the troop is encamped, sir, from that spot I can lead you to that very canyon, and by a way that will get us there long before the Indians. When we get there, sir, we can ambush the retreating redskins and cut them to pieces, and easily hold the place against double the numbers that we fought today."

"Ride alongside of me here, Jack, and we'll talk it over," was the answer.

The scout did so, and the officer talked earnestly with Buckskin Jack.

When at last the camp came in sight, Wallace Preston reported at once to Lieutenant Lawson. That officer was suffering greatly from his wound, but he said eagerly:

"Preston, you have won your spurs this day, and in a splendid manner. I am glad indeed, to see you back safe and well. I suffer so that I can be of no use, so you take command. The surgeon will remain here with me, while I believe it will be well to pursue those redskins further."

"Buckskin Jack, sir, has made a suggestion which I would like to follow, especially as I came upon an Indian girl and her father, who I found later was none other than the great chief, Bad Face. She speaks English perfectly, and as the chief was wounded, and I do not war on women, I let them have my horse, put the chief in my saddle, placed the girl behind him and let them go to the village."

"What did you do this for?"

"I could do nothing else, sir, as I could not war against a woman and a wounded man. But let me tell you, sir, that when I shook hands with the girl, she left in my hands a slip of paper upon which was written with a blunt pencil, and very badly: 'The Indians will retreat through Blue Rock Canyon.' That was all."

"Ah, she writes English?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then do you take the troop and reach Blue Rock Canyon, for I know it and you can wipe that gang of redskins out."

"I decided upon that, sir, when Buckskin Jack told me what he did and that he could guide us by a secret trail over the range and get us through ahead of the redskins."

"Go at once, and remember I feel that you are well able to take command of this troop. This day you have certainly won your spurs."

This very interesting story will be brought to a conclusion in next week's Ledger. It will be followed by a rattling good story called Lury of South Dakota. Any new subscriber or any one renewing a subscription is entitled to the Ledger's free cameras or patterns as announced on pages thirteen and fifteen. Do not wait. If your subscription has expired renew it at once before the paper is stopped. Thousands have renewed their subscriptions during the last month; we have also received thousands of entirely new subscribers. Now is the time, do not delay.

Doctor Renhart's Wife.

(Continued from page three.)

tions arising out of the strange situation are tragical and thrilling and will fully repay the reader for continuing the story to the end. The Ledger publishes the productions of the greatest fiction writers in the United States. If you are not already a subscriber for the Ledger you ought to take the paper regularly. It should be in every family. Send in your subscription and you will be glad, afterwards, that you did so. If you desire our free camers or patterns look at our announcement on pages thirteen and fifteen.

FORGOTTEN HEROES.

There is a great deal of heroism in the world that is never sung by the poet. Those wondrous instances of self-sacrifice and endurance, which burn on the historian's page into such a glow and warmth that all our hearts are melted, are but specimens of what is being borne and done every day. No record will ever be made of the heroism of every-day life, but some time, in the great future, we shall linger in the alcoves of the celestial library in the New Jerusalem, and read of deeds unsung and never eulogized as worthy of remembrance as any that are recorded by eloquent pens for the admiration of the world.

We all weep over Thermopylae, and remember, with tearful affection, the sublime patriotism that yielded only with death. But I think Leonidas and his followers were no braver and no more self-sacrificing than hundreds that went into the valley of death, bearing the flag of America. Indeed, I think Thermopylae but a specimen of what every nation will do under like circumstances. I am glad that its glory has been sung, but let us not forget that human nature is one, and that the reddened glebe of every great battlefield of every age, could it but speak, would prove itself the equal of the gory pass of Thessaly.

I am inclined to believe that every true man has in him the stuff out of which heroes are made. It slumbers in some deep recess of the heart, and may never be called forth, or when a great and sudden calamity befalls the home or the city, it may at once declare itself.

Joseph II of Austria, with the fate of a whole people depending on his life, with a jeweled crown waiting for him, forgot everything when his lovely wife was stricken with a terrible malady; and, thinking only of his own broken heart, held her in his arms while dying, and kissed her cold lips when dead. What was empire, or wealth, or throne to him then. He was not the future emperor, he was simply the husband of Isabella. The whole continent rang with his praises. From that time to this, his heroism has been named only to be wondered at and admired. The music of that deed has echoed through the length and breadth of three generations.

But do you think that an imperial husband is the only one who buries his heart in the grave of his wife, and risks everything in his grief at his loss? I tell you, nay. Far down from the throne many a poor peasant, whose name is written in no book, save the Book of Life, watched as tenderly by the side of a great grief, and, perhaps, shared the fate of his loved one without a murmur.

Sorrow is democratic. It regards neither ring nor sect. It knocks at the door of the hut, and, though unwelcome, crosses the threshold, and does its work; it lifts the golden knocker of the palace door, and, without the least ceremony, takes its place by the side of queen or dauphin. And, better than that, the power to endure its presence, and to yield bravely to its will, is also democratic. Men who have no purses, whose only possessions are a leathern scrip and an oaken staff, may be as brave as he whose exchequer is not to be exhausted, or he who leads an army to victory, and then sits upon the empurpled throne.

Two illustrations of this statement occur to me. A mill-owner, the husband of a lovely wife, and the father of three children, held a little property away up in Northern Michigan when those terrible fires broke out, which illuminated the whole West, some time since. He was an ordinary man, a giant in stature, and a fair specimen of the frontiersman. The flames of the burning forest were miles away when he went to sleep, and he felt perfectly secure.

Th next morning, he was awakened by the crackling of the fire, and the stifling, smoky atmosphere. He rushed out of the house and discovered that the flames had fairly laid siege to his dwelling. They had crept all round him. There was no outlet, no escape. Whichever way he looked, a dreadful wall of fire was in front, and hot cinders were falling all about as thick as snow-flakes. Rushing back into the house, he took two children from their crib, and held them so close to his heart that they could not know of their danger. A third he held by the hand, while his wife followed close behind. They were all deposited in a little hollowed space, in the middle of the clearing in front of the house, and carefully covered with blankets. But this was not enough. Fire seemed to be in the very air, and he must get water, or they would all be burned.

He seized a couple of buckets, looked first at the sheet of flame between him and the running river, then at his wife and little ones, and was ready for the sacrifice. With quick, brave bounds, he rushed through the burning wood, and came back with the water, but fearfully scorched. A second journey he made, and this time the flesh hung in shreds from his arm. But what were four buckets of water at such a time as that? The air, seven times heated, dried the wet blankets in an instant, almost. Wife and children must be saved. He forgot all about himself. He was of the stuff out of which the ancient Greeks made their gods. In all the realm of mythology, you can find nothing braver or grander. A third time he rushed to the river. But the eager and revengeful fire, beaten twice by a soul that forgot its body, and took no note of pain, determined not to be balked again. It hissed in his face, it curled up all round about him, burning his clothes fairly off. The old hero with a giant's will battled, but the odds were too great. He dropped his buckets, grew dizzy, then faint, and at last fell.

A great soul fell there.

When, with eyes wet with tears, with cheeks crimson with admiration of such heroism, you ask me: Who was this man? I answer: No one knows. He is one of the nameless heroes. He was only a common workman, and yet he stands side by side with the greatest, a rival of those grand souls whose deeds are sung anew to each incoming generation.

The other story is very like this one. The scene is laid in the midst of the great Boston fire. That noble city seemed the last to fall, but her granite walls crumbled into dust before the fire and water. On Sunday morning, when all the populace had gathered silent and sad, to see the flame-fiend do his very worst, a four-story house, which had been thought beyond the reach of the flames, caught from a cinder which fell on a vulnerable spot on the roof.

When the house was fairly enveloped, a woman rushed to the window, and frantically called for help. It was almost certain death to make the attempt to save her, and yet no sooner did that agonized face make its appeal to the crowd below than a fireman grasped a ladder, stood it against the wall, and began the ascent. Never thinking of himself, he clambered up, and was just drawing the terrified mother from the very jaws of the fire, when, with a crash that made every beholder shiver with agony, the whole wall fell in, and woman and fireman were lost in the crackling, hissing flames, that rose a hundred feet in the air to proclaim their victory.

Who was he that thus periled his own life to save that of a stranger? I know not. No one knows. No poet will set that deed to music, and yet some day we may see him sitting by the side of the martyrs.

So, throughout our common, every day life are scattered bravery and greatness. Perhaps in your life and mine there have been times when we have struggled with a giant's arm. Who knows? Only God.

Items of Interest.

The mouth of the flea is located between his forelegs.

Diamonds have been discovered in fallen meteorites.

The following notice was recently conspicuously displayed in the engine-dispatcher's office at the roundhouse in a town within fifty miles of Albany: "Trainmen on passenger trains must not go through the coaches with overalls on, without first taking them off."

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THE WIFE'S STRATAGEM.

It was a bright, cozy room, and the cheery young wife who occupied it made a most charming picture as she sat in the blended glow and softness of the firelight and gaslight, with her deft fingers busily fashioning a sheen of exquisite embroidery on the velvet ground of a pair of slippers for her absent husband.

The little dimpling smile curving her lips plainly revealed that the sunshine of tender, happy thoughts hovered about her labor of love, in spite of the faint shadow which displaced it, whenever she paused to glance at the clock on the mantel, or listen for the dear, familiar step, tarrying unwontedly long from her side.

She was not accustomed to spend her evenings alone, and it seemed a bit strange and lonely not to see the owner of that step in his usual place, reading aloud, laughing and chatting, or gayly "building castles in the air" for their future.

What could detain him?

He had promised not to be long, but—well, he so seldom spent an evening out, she had not ought to complain, and, more swiftly plying her needle, the smile would flit back to her face.

But, as the hour grew late, and he did not come, the shadow returned again and again, growing darker and darker, till finally, it settled ominously down on her heart, and throwing aside her work, a weary vigil was hers, till the sound of heavy, unfamiliar steps, and a quick, sharp ring at the door-bell, sent her to her feet, with dilating eyes and colorless lips.

However, being a resolute little woman, she hastened to the door, and fearlessly opening it, there, between two of his friends, she beheld her husband—dead drunk!

One glance of shocked surprise, and, realizing the truth in all its bitterness, she would have fallen, but out of the whirl of her thoughts flashed a stratagem, which none but a woman's ready wit could have suggested. With the silently breathed words:

"May Heaven forgive me the deception!" and a little cry of self-dissembled terror, she reeled against the door-jamb, gasping:

"My husband is struck with apoplexy."

"No, no, madame, it is nothing so serious as that. Believe me, he will soon be better," was the earnest assurance, in tones that quietly veiled the speaker's inclination to smile.

She unsteadily lifted her husband's limp, heavy hand, and, nervously chafing it, chokingly answered:

"Gentlemen, you cannot deceive me. I know it is apoplexy," and, directing them to carry him up stairs, she anxiously led the way to a pleasant, gaslit chamber, where, after bidding them lay him down on the white-draped bed, she earnestly besought them to go for a physician.

Deeming her as unsuspecting as she seemed, they hastened to gratify her, enjoying a quiet laugh at the husband's expense.

When the physician arrived, he found his patient well tucked up in bed, and the wife pacing the floor, wringing her hands, and acting like one distraught.

"Oh, doctor," she cried, "my husband is struck with apoplexy, and you must bleed him, or he'll die!"

"I hope not, madame, and trust there is no serious cause for alarm. Doubtless, he will be better by morning," replied the physician gravely feeling the unconscious man's pulse.

"But, doctor, it is apoplexy, and I insist that he must be bled," she passionately persisted.

"Well, madame, at all events, it won't harm him, and, as you insist so strongly, I have no other alternative," and the patient was bled as scientifically as the wife could desire.

A little sigh of relief, and again she cried: "Now, doctor, a blister on his head!"

"But, my dear madame," began the physician, hardly willing to carry the farce so far, but she vehemently interrupted him, exclaiming half indignantly:

"Why, doctor, would you let my husband die? Wasn't my father a physician, and don't I know what ought to be done in a case of apoplexy? Please apply the blister." The physician obeyed, mentally ejaculating:

"When a woman will, she will, you may depend on't.
And when she won't, she won't, and there's no end on't."

Then he circumspectly departed, and, whatever his suspicions were, he prudently kept them to himself.

When the husband awoke to consciousness, he was somewhat amazed and bewildered.

Putting his hand to his head, he called to his wife, who hastened to bend tenderly over him.

"Why, little wife, what's the matter? What ails my head, and what makes me so weak?"

"Hush, hush, my darling! You must not talk, for you are too ill," she softly whispered, placing her hand caressingly on his forehead.

"Too ill!" he echoed, "I——" and the hand fluttered to his lips, compelling silence perforce.

"Be silent, love," was the low, gentle caution; "it's apoplexy, and the doctor was here and bled you, and blistered your poor head. You are better now; but, unless you keep perfectly quiet, I dare not answer for the consequences. So come, be a good darling, and see what a splendid little nurse I'll make," and the beguiling voice was full of tenderest love.

But before it paused, memory had returned to the listener, and, looking into the sweet eyes above him, shame and remorse sealed his lips. He knew he would have to remain a prisoner in the house till his head should heal, and the thought was anything but exhilarating.

However, he found his wife such an engaging nurse that the period sped almost as a dream, in which she moved about him like a bright, ministering angel, with a smile on her lip, a light in her eyes, and a tenderness in her manner that jealously guarded against revealing, by a word, look or a sign, that she even dreamed her husband had been brought home to her drunk.

No. It was apoplexy—that terrible apoplexy—which might have made her a widow; and, with her face hidden on his shoulder, the little dissembler told him more than once how she had wrung her hands and wept over him that most wretched night when he did not even know her, his own little wife.

Thus, with many a tender blandishment, she beguiled the term of his enforced imprisonment, which, notwithstanding its attractions, he was not loath to leave when at liberty to go out again, of course, happy as a bird on the wing, for, where dwells the man content to abide at home, day after day, as women do, without sometimes proving—whisper it low—a bit of a bear?

But, before his wife allowed him to go, she threw her arms around his neck, praying, apparently, in a perfect fever of apprehension:

"Oh my husband, you will be careful of yourself, won't you? Remember, you might have another stroke of apoplexy, and then —— Oh, my love, the mere thought of it frightens me!" and a little gush of tears, not wholly make-believe, swept over her, for, in spite of herself, the memory of that night was like a sharp probe in her heart, piercing it to the very core, when she thought her husband might be inclined to tread the perilous path of intemperance.

But her fears were groundless.

That was the first and only time she ever saw him intoxicated, and, whatever he suspected, he wisely followed her example, and discreetly held his peace, for her stratagem had effectually cured him.

Faith With Works.

"Do you believe in athletics?" was asked a well-known London business man who was found practicing with dumb-bells at the back of his warehouse the other day.

"Certainly I do," he promptly replied.

"Think it is good for your health?"

"I know it is. Why, a couple of years ago I took 24 lessons in boxing and worked up a big muscle. I was going home one night, when a man jumped out at me from the alley. In a minute he was nowhere."

"Hit him hard, eh?"

"No; I didn't hit him at all."

"Trip him up and fall on him?"

"No."

"Didn't kick him?"

"No."

"Well, what did you do?"

"Outran him! But for my athletic exercises I couldn't have done it."

◆

An honest man never speculates with other men's money.

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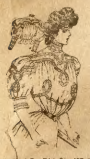
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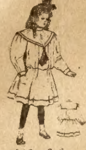
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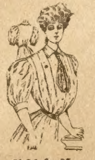
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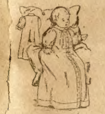
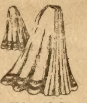

5308 INFANTS WRAPPER ONE SIZE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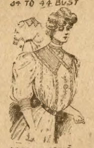
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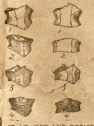
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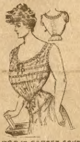
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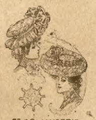
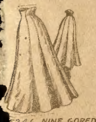

5340 LINGERIE HATS IN TWO STYLES ONE SIZE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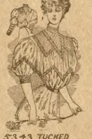
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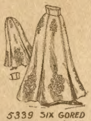
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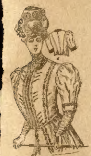
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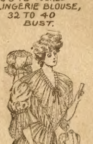
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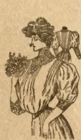
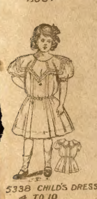
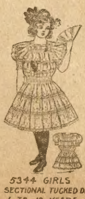
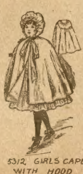

5341 TUCKED YOKE BLOUSE 32 TO 42 BUST


5338 CHILD'S DRESS 4 TO 10 YEARS


5344 GIRLS SECTIONAL TUCKED DRESS, 6 TO 12 YEARS.


5312 GIRLS CAPE WITH HOOD 4 TO 12 YEARS.

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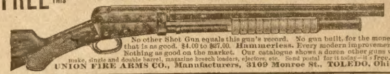

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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

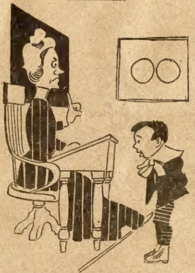
ANN JONES.

Of all the little girls that are,
Ann Jones the nicest is by far,
She always whacks up candy fair;
And ain't she got the yellowest hair!

Some girls they wrinkle up their nose
At all us fellers, and say: "Those
Foolish and dirty boys are here,
So let's go away, my dear."

When girls puts on such airs as that
I always feel like saying "Scat;"
Because when girls are scared, they fuss,
And always holler "Help!" to us.

Ann Jones ain't like those other ones.
No, sir! When she sees me she runs
And says, "Hallo!" in SUCH glad tones.
I tell you, I just like Ann Jones!

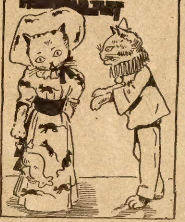


Teacher—Willie, what animal is web-footed?

Willie—The spider, ma'am.

The Helpful Word.

Give the young and struggling a word of encouragement when you can. You will not leave those plants in your window boxes without water nor refuse to open the shutters that the sunlight may fall upon them, but you would leave some human flower to suffer from want of appreciation or the sunlight of encouragement. There are a few hardy souls that can struggle along on stony soil—shrubs that can wait for the dews and sunbeams, vines that climb without kindly training—but only a few. Utter the kind word when you can see that it is deserved. The thought that "no one cares and no one knows" blights many a bud of promise. Be it the young artist at his easel, the young preacher at his pulpit, the workman at his bench, the boy at his mathematical problems or your little girl at the piano, give what praise you can.



The cats attending at the ball,
Were highly jealous one and all,
Because the man-cats had no eyes
Except for Miss Tabitha Slies.
The cats inquired: Who can tell
What makes that saucy puss the belle?"
Then one went close and looked at her
And came back angry to the fur
"That minx," cried she, "is just a cheat!
She won her man-cats by deceit.
She's hung her gown with rats and mice!
No wonder man-cats think she's nice!

Henry's Novel Snore Cure.

Henry and Penrick, called by their playmates "Henry and Penry," were twin brothers and slept together in a trundle bed. They were exactly alike in every respect except that Penry would sleep with his mouth open. Owing to this, Penry had the bad habit of snoring and kept Henry awake.

Henry tried every plan that he could devise to break Penry from snoring. He used to wake him up to make him close his mouth, but Penry would simply turn sleepily over and begin snoring again.

Penry's snoring became worse and worse, and Henry was almost in despair. He could not sleep at all with his brother's awful noises going on.

At last one night as Penry lay upon his back snoring loudly through a wide-open mouth, Henry had an idea.

He leaned over the side of the bed, picked up Penry's buckled garter that lay upon the floor, pulled it around under Penry's chin and over the top of his head, and then drew the cover up to sleep in peace.

The mother of the twins was greatly surprised next morning to find both boys sound asleep. Penry with a piece of elastic around his head which kept his face tightly closed.

And the best of it is, that it did really and truly cure Penry of snoring.

Out of the Mouths of Babes.

"Mamma," said little Ethel, who was looking at the pictures in a Sunday school book, "how do the angels get their night gowns on over their wings?"

—

"I think papa and mamma likes the baby better than they do me," said 4-year-old Flossie to the visitor, "'cause he lets 'em do just as they please."

—

"Tommy," said the teacher, "don't you know better than to talk aloud in school?"

"But what is a feller to do?" queried Tommy. "You said the other day I mustn't whisper."

—

It was the roll of a distant thunder that caused little Margie to observe, "They must be cleaning house in Heaven today, mamma."

"Why do you think so, dear?" asked her mother.

"I hear the angels movin' the furniture around," explained Margie.

WHEN A BOY IS BIG.

It's wonderful how a feller's mind
Get's different when he's tall.
He doesn't care for things that used
To please when he was small.

A year ago a rocking horse
Just seemed my chief desire.
But now a pair of nice long pants
Is to what I aspire.

I bet that if I had them on
And walked along the street,
I would be taken for a man
By every one I'd meet.

It seems real funny to me now
That just a year ago,
When I was but a kid, that I
Could be contented so.

Comparison.

The tourist stopped at the little cabin where an old colored mammy was bending over a big tub.

"Good morning, mammy," greeted the tourist.

"Mawnin', sah," responded "mammy."

"Where's your son Sam?"

"Gone, sah, Ah dunno wheh."

"Well, he always was a bad boy, mammy."

"'Deed he was, sah. He was dess lak det ol' blue umbrella Ah los' in de thunderstohm. He was hahd to raise, powahful hard to raise, en afteh Ah did raise him he jes' jumped away fum me en Ah ain't seen him since."

RIDDLE, RIDDLE, WHAT AM I?

My head is always higher than my mouth.
When I am dry, all things parch up with
drouth.
I'm very swift, yet I can't run up hill.
I am quite free, yet work the miller's will.
I own two banks, yet not a cent is mine.
I have a breast, yet neither ribs or spine.
I'm always running, yet I have no feet.
I swallow all things, yet I never eat.
There is no human hand that can hold me,
Yet I am just as soft as soft can be.
To find me you will simply need to look
For something that is bigger than a brook.

Heart in the Right Place.

A man who sells cut flowers at a stand downtown was waiting for trade the other afternoon, when a newsboy, dirty and ragged, came running up.

"Say," said the boy, "whot's the price uf them red flowers?"

"Those carnations, you mean? They're 2 cents apiece," said the man.

"I'll trade you a paper for one," said the boy. The flower seller accepted the offer and the boy ran away with his carnation. A few minutes later he returned.

"Say," he said, "I just sold a paper. Gimme another uf them red flowers. Here's the 2 cents."

The man at the stand handed him another carnation and accepted the pennies with a smile. As the boy started away the man became curious.

"Say, kid," he said, "what are you going to do with those flowers?"

The boy took a better hold on his papers. "Give 'em to the ol' lady," he said. "She's sick in bed."

Then he left on the run, yelling, "Pape! Pape! All about—"

A New Animal.

Little Harold had never been to the zoo before, and when his father stopped just in front of the elephant, he exclaimed:

"Oh, father, just look at that big cow with her horns in her mouth eating hay with her tail!"

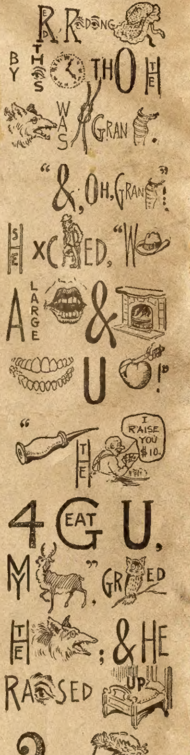
The Difference.

Mamma—Johnnie, you have been fighting. I can tell it by the look in your eye

Johnnie—Yes; but, ma, you should see the look in the other boy's eye!

CAN YOU READ THIS STORY OF LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD?

CHAPTER XVI



TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK WITH SOLUTION OF CHAP. XVI

Solution of Chapter XV.

"Oh, Granny," cried little Red Riding Hood, 'what great eyes you have got!"

"All the better to see you with, my dear," said the wolf.

'What great arms you have got!"

"All the better to fold you in."

"What great ears!"

"All the better to hear your sweet voice.'

"And what a large nose!"

"All the better to smell.'

No wonder the child was frightened.